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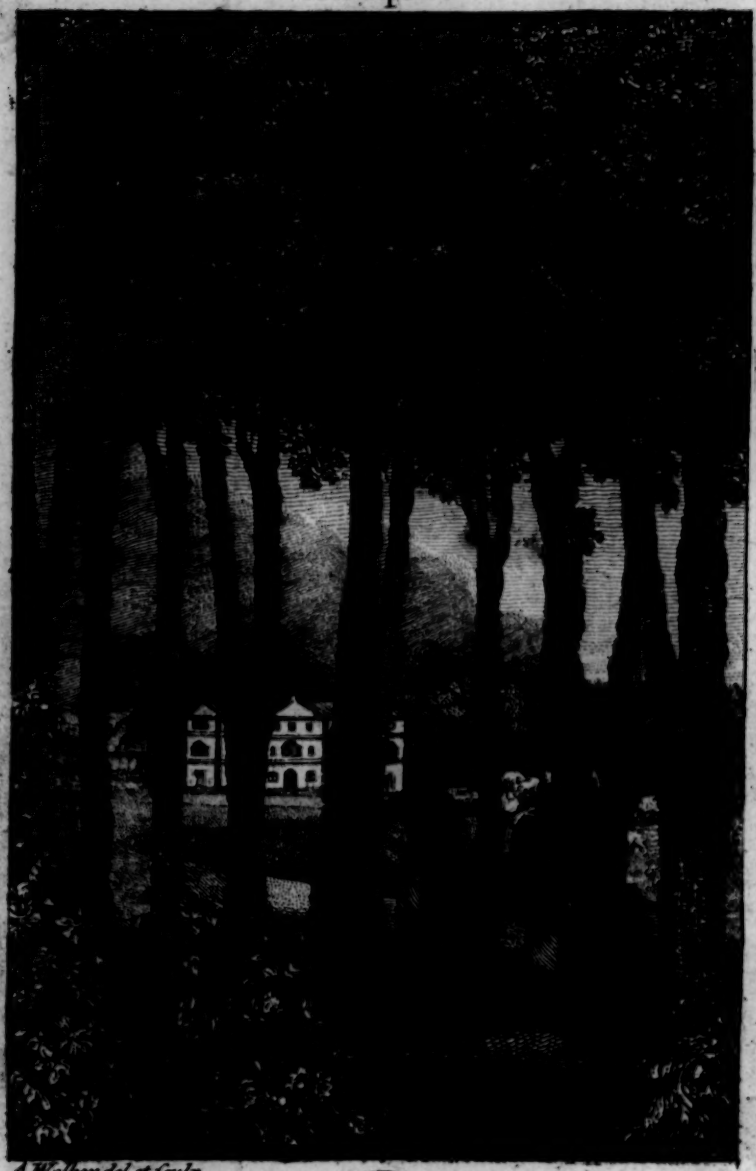

A Walker del. et ſculp.

Millenium Hall.

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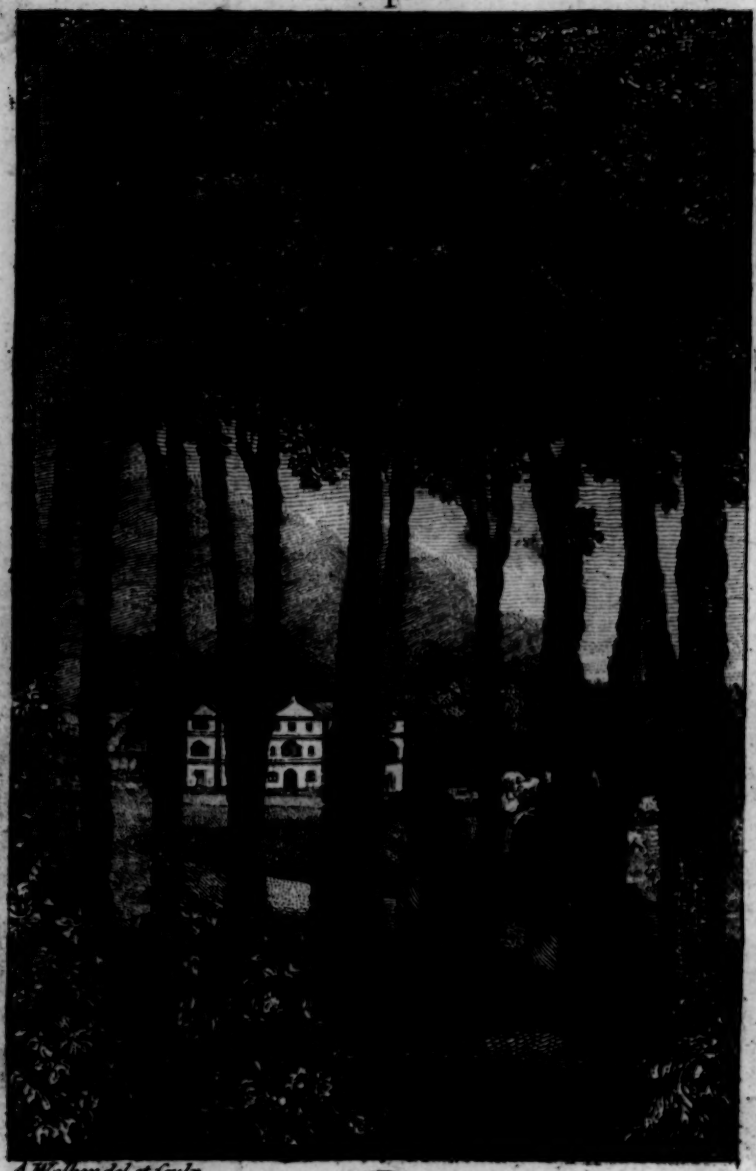

A Walker del. et ſculp.

Millenium Hall.

A DESCRIPTION of

MILLENIUM HALL,

AND THE

COUNTRY ADJACENT:

Together with the

CHARACTERS of the INHABITANTS,

And ſuch Hiſtorical

ANECDOTES and REFLECTIONS,

AS

May excite in the READER proper Sentiments of Humanity, and lead the Mind to the Love of VIRTUE.

BY

A GENTLEMAN on his Travels.

LONDON:

Printed for J. NEWBERY, at the Bible and Sun, in St. Paul's Church-yard.

MDCCLXII.

BRITISH MUSEUM

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Publiſher of this Volume is under ſome Difficulties; not from any Apprehenſions of loſing by the Book; for great part of the Impreſſion is beſpoke; his Anxiety ariſes from the Author's addreſſing the Volume to him, and making him a Compliment in the Beginning; which, as he is conſcious he does not deſerve, he hopes the Reader will impute to its proper Cauſe, namely, to the Warmth of Friendſhip, which is too apt to exalt the Object it eſteems. The Gentleman who wrote this Volume, is of too much Conſequence to be obſtinately contradicted; and as the Bookſeller could not prevail on him to leave out the Compliment above-mentioned, he hopes his publiſhing of it will not be imputed to any other Motive, but that of his Readineſs to obey.

BRITISH MUSEUM

A DESCRIPTION of

MILLENIUM HALL.

DEAR SIR,

THOUGH, when I left London, I promiſed to write to you as ſoon as I had reached my northern retreat, yet, I believe, you little expected inſtead of a letter to receive a volume; but I ſhould not ſtand excuſed to myſelf, were I to fail communicating to you the pleaſure I received in my road hither, from the ſight of a ſociety, whoſe acquaintance I owe to one of thoſe fortunate, though in appearance trifling, accidents, from which ſometimes ariſe the moſt pleaſing circumſtances of our lives; for as ſuch I muſt ever eſteem the acquaintance of that amiable family, who have fixed their abode at a place which I ſhall nominate Millenium Hall, as the beſt adapted to the lives of the inhabitants, and to avoid giving the real name, fearing to offend that modeſty which has induced them to conceal their virtues in retirement.

In giving you a very circumſtantial account of this ſociety, I confeſs I have a view beyond the pleaſure, which a mind like yours muſt receive from the contemplation of ſo much virtue. Your conſtant endeavours have been to inculcate the beſt principles into youthful minds, the only probable means of mending mankind; for the foundation of moſt of our virtues, or our vices, are laid in that ſeaſon of life when we are moſt ſuſceptible of impreſſion, and when on our minds, as on a ſheet of white

paper, any characters may be engraven; theſe laudable endeavours, by which we may reaſonably expect the riſing generation will be greatly improved, render particularly due to you, any examples which may teach thoſe virtues that are not eaſily learnt by precept, and ſhew the facility of what, in meer ſpeculation, might appear ſurrounded with a diſcouraging impracticability: you are the beſt judge, whether, by being made public, they may be conducive to your great end of benefiting the world. I therefore ſubmit the future fate of the following ſheets entirely to you, and ſhall not think any prefatory apology for the publication at all requiſite; for though a man who ſuppoſes his own life and actions deſerve univerſal notice, or can be of general uſe, may be liable to the imputation of vanity, yet, as I have no other ſhare than that of a ſpectator, and auditor, in what I purpoſe to relate, I preſume no apology can be required; for my vanity muſt rather be mortified than flattered in the deſcription of ſuch virtues as will continually accuſe me of my own deficiencies, and lead me to make an humiliating compariſon between theſe excellent ladies and myſelf.

You may remember, Sir, that when I took leave of you with a deſign of retiring to my native county, there to enjoy the plenty and leiſure for which a few years labour had furniſhed me with the neceſſary requiſites, I was adviſed by an eminent phyſician to make a very extenſive tour through the weſtern part of this kingdom, in order, by frequent change of air, and continued exerciſe, to cure the ill effects of my long abode in the hot and unwholſome climate of Jamaica, where, while I increaſed my fortune, I gradually impaired my conſtitution; and though one, who like me, has dedicated all his application to mercantile gain,

will

will not allow that he has given up the ſubſtance for the ſhadow, yet perhaps it would be difficult to deny, that I thus ſacrificed the greater good in purſuit of the leſs.

The eargerneſs with which I longed to fix in my wiſhed for retirement, made me imagine, that when I had once reached it, even the purſuit of health would be an inſufficient inducement to determine me to leave my retreat, I therefore choſe to make the adviſed tour before I went into the north. As the pleaſure ariſing from a variety of beautiful objects is but half enjoyed, when we have no one to ſhare it with us, I accepted the offer Mr. Lamont (the ſon of my old friend) made of accompanying me in my journey. As this young gentleman has not the good fortune to be known to you, it may not be amiſs, as will appear in the ſequel, to let you into his character.

Mr. Lamont is a young man of about twenty-five years of age, of an agreeable perſon, and lively underſtanding; both perhaps have concurred to render him a coxcomb. The vivacity of his parts ſoon gained him ſuch a degree of encouragement as excited his vanity, and raiſed in him an high opinion of himſelf. A very generous father enabled him to partake of every faſhionable amuſement, and the natural bent of his mind ſoon led him into all the diſſipation which the gay world affords. Uſeful and improving ſtudies were laid aſide for ſuch deſultory reading, as he found moſt proper to furniſh him with topics for converſation, in the idle ſocieties he frequented. Thus that vivacity, which, properly qualified, might have become true wit, degenerated into pertneſs and impertinence. A conſciouſneſs of an underſtanding, which he never exerted, rendered him conceited; thoſe talents which nature kindly beſtowed upon him, by

being perverted, gave riſe to his greateſt faults. His reaſoning faculty, by a partial and ſuperficial uſe, led him to infidelity, and the deſire of being thought ſuperiorly diſtinguiſhing, eſtabliſhed him an infidel. Faſhion, not reaſon, has been the guide of all his thoughts and actions. But with theſe faults he is good-natured, and not unentertaining, eſpecially in a tête à tête, where he does not deſire to ſhine, and therefore his vanity lies dormant, and ſuffers the beſt qualifications of his mind to break forth. This induced me to accept of him as a fellow traveller.

We proceeded on our journey as far as Cornwall, without meeting with any other than the uſual incidents of the road, till one afternoon, when our chaiſe broke down. The worſt circumſtance attending this accident was our being ſeveral miles from a town, and ſo ignorant of the country, that we knew not whether there was any village within a moderate diſtance. We ſent the poſtilion on my man's horſe to the next town to fetch a ſmith, and leaving my ſervant to guard the chaiſe, Mr. Lamont and I walked towards an avenue of oaks, which we obſerved at a ſmall diſtance. The thick ſhade they afforded us, the fragrance wafted from the woodbines with which they were encircled, was ſo delightful, and the beauty of the grounds ſo very attracting, that we ſtrolled on, deſirous of approaching the houſe to which this avenue led. It is a mile and a half in length, but the eye is ſo charmed with the remarkable verdure and neatneſs of the fields, with the beauty of the flowers which are planted all round them, and ſeem to mix with the quickſet hedges, that time ſteals away inſenſibly.

When we had walked about half a mile in a ſcene truly paſtoral, we began to think ourſelves in the days of Theocritus, ſo ſweetly did the ſound of a flute come wafted through the air. Never

did

did paſtoral ſwain make ſweeter melody on his oaten reed. Our ears now afforded us freſh attraction, and with quicker ſteps we proceeded, till we came within ſight of the muſician that had charmed us. Our pleaſure was not a little heightened, to ſee, as the ſcene promiſed, in reality a ſhepherd, watching a large flock of ſheep. We continued motionleſs, liſtening to his muſic, till a lamb ſtraying from its fold demanded his care, and he laid aſide his inſtrument, to guide home the little wanderer.

Curioſity now prompted us to walk on; the nearer we came to the houſe, the greater we found the profuſion of flowers which ornamented every field. Some had no other defence than hedges of roſe trees and ſweet-briars, ſo artfully planted, that they made a very thick hedge, while at the lower part, pinks, jonquills, hyacinths, and various other flowers, ſeemed to grow under their protection. Primroſes, violets, lillies of the valley, and polyanthuſes enriched ſuch ſhady ſpots, as, for want of ſun, were not well calculated for the production of other flowers. The mixture of perfumes which exhaled from this profuſion compoſed the higheſt fragrance, and ſometimes the different ſcents regaled the ſenſes alternately, and filled us with reflections on the infinite variety of nature.

When we were within about a quarter of a mile of the houſe, the ſcene became ſtill more animated. On one ſide was the greateſt variety of cattle, the moſt beautiful of their kinds, grazing in fields whoſe verdure equalled that of the fineſt turf, nor were they deſtitute of their ornaments, only the woodbines and jeſſamine, and ſuch flowers, as might have tempted the inhabitants of theſe paſtures to crop them, were defended with roſes and ſweet-briars, whoſe thorns preſerved them from all attacks.

Though Lamont had hitherto been little accuſtomed to admire nature, yet was he much captivated with this ſcene, and with his uſual levity cried out, 'If Nebuchadnezzar had ſuch paſtures as theſe to 'range in, his ſeven years expulſion from human 'ſociety might not be the leaſt agreeable part of his 'life.' My attention was too much engaged to criticize the light turn of Lamont's mind, nor did his thoughts continue long on the ſame ſubject, for our obſervation was ſoon called off, by a company of hay-makers in the fields on the other ſide of the avenue. The cleanlineſs and neatneſs of the young women thus employed, rendered them a more pleaſing ſubject for Lamont's contemplation than any thing we had yet ſeen; in them we beheld rural ſimplicity, without any of thoſe marks of poverty and booriſh ruſticity, which would have ſpoilt the paſtoral air of the ſcene around us; but not even the happy amiable innocence, which their figures and countenances expreſſed, gave me ſo much ſatisfaction as the ſight of the number of children, who were all exerting the utmoſt of their ſtrength, with an air of delighted emulation between themſelves, to contribute their ſhare to the general undertaking. Their eyes ſparkled with that ſpirit which health and activity can only give, and their roſy cheeks ſhewed the benefits of youthful labour.

Curioſity is one of thoſe inſatiable paſſions that grow by gratification; it ſtill prompted us to proceed, not unſatisfied with what we had ſeen, but deſirous to ſee ſtill more of this earthly paradiſe. We approached the houſe, wherein, as it was the only human habitation in view, we imagined muſt reſide the Primum Mobile of all we had yet beheld. We were admiring the magnificence of the ancient ſtructure, and inclined to believe it the abode of the genius which preſided over this fairy land, when

when we were ſurprized by a ſtorm, which had been for ſome time gathering over our heads, though our thoughts had been too agreeably engaged to pay much attention to it. We took ſhelter under the thick ſhade of a large oak, but the violence of the thunder and lightening made our ſituation rather uncomfortable. All thoſe whom we had a little before ſeen ſo buſy, left their work on hearing the firſt clap of thunder, and ran with the utmoſt ſpeed to Millenium Hall, ſo I ſhall call the noble manſion of which I am ſpeaking, as to an aſſured aſylum againſt every evil.

Some of theſe perſons, I imagine, perceived us; for immediately after they entered, came out a woman, who, by her air and manner of addreſs, we gueſſed to be the houſe-keeper, and deſired us to walk into the houſe till the ſtorm was over. We made ſome difficulties about taking that liberty, but ſhe ſtill perſiſting in her invitation, had my curioſity to ſee the inhabitants of this hoſpitable manſion been leſs, I could not have refuſed to comply, as by prolonging theſe ceremonious altercations I was detaining her in the ſtorm, we therefore agreed to follow her.

If we had been inclined before to fancy ourſelves on enchanted ground, when after being led through a large hall, we were introduced to the ladies, who knew nothing of what had paſſed, I could ſcarcely forbear believing myſelf in the Attick ſchool. The room where they ſat was about forty-five feet long, of a proportionable breadth, with three windows on one ſide, which looked into a garden, and a large bow at the upper end. Over againſt the windows were three large book-caſes, upon the top of the middle one ſtood an orrery, and a globe on each of the others. In the bow ſat two ladies reading, with pen, ink, and paper on a table before them, at

which was a young girl tranſlating out of French. At the lower end of the room was a lady painting, with exquiſite art indeed, a beautiful Madona; near her another, drawing a landſcape out of her own imagination; a third, carving a picture-frame in wood, in the fineſt manner; a fourth, engraving; and a young girl reading aloud to them; the diſtance from the ladies in the bow-window being ſuch, that they could receive no diſturbance from her. At the next window were placed a group of girls, from the age of ten years old to fourteen. Of theſe, one was drawing figures, another a landſcape, a third a perſpective view, a fourth engraving, a fifth carving, a ſixth turning in wood, a ſeventh writing, an eighth cutting out linnen, another making a gown, and by them an empty chair and a tent, with embroidery, finely fancied, before it, which we afterwards found had been left by a young girl who was gone to practiſe on the harpſichord.

As ſoon as we entered they all roſe up, and the houſe-keeper introduced us, by ſaying, ſhe ſaw us ſtanding under a tree to avoid the ſtorm, and ſo had deſired us to walk in. The ladies received us with the greateſt politeneſs, and expreſſed concern, that when their houſe was ſo near, we ſhould have recourſe to ſo inſufficient a ſhelter. Our ſurprize at the ſight of ſo uncommon a ſociety, occaſioned our making but an awkward return to their obliging reception; nor when we obſerved how many arts we had interrupted, could we avoid being aſhamed that we had then intruded upon them.

But before I proceed farther, I ſhall endeavour to give you ſome idea of the perſons of the ladies, whoſe minds I ſhall afterwards beſt deſcribe by their actions. The two who ſat in the bow window were called Mrs. Maynard and Mrs. Selvyn. Mrs. Maynard is between forty and fifty years of age, a little

little woman, well made, with a lively and genteel air, her hair black, and her eyes of the ſame colour, bright and piercing, her features good, and complexion agreeable, though brown. Her countenance expreſſes all the vivacity of youth, tempered with a ſerenity which becomes her age.

Mrs. Selvyn can ſcarcely be called tall, though ſhe approaches that ſtandard. Her features are too irregular to be handſome, but there is a ſenſibility and delicacy in her countenance which render her extremely engaging; and her perſon is elegant.

Mrs. Mancel, whom we had diſturbed from her painting, is tall and finely formed, has great elegance of figure, and is graceful in every motion. Her hair is of a fine brown, her eyes blue, with all that ſenſible ſweetneſs which is peculiar to that colour. In ſhort, ſhe excels in every beauty but the bloom, which is ſo ſoon faded, and ſo impoſſible to be imitated by the utmoſt efforts of art, nor has ſhe ſuffered any farther by years than the loſs of that radiance, which renders beauty rather more reſplendant than more pleaſing.

Mrs. Trentham, who was carving by her, was the talleſt of the company, and in dignity of air particularly excels, but her features and complexion have been ſo injured by the ſmall pox, that one can but juſt gueſs they were once uncommonly fine; a ſweetneſs of countenance, and a very ſenſible look, indeed, ſtill remain, and have baffled all the moſt cruel ravages of that diſtemper.

Lady Mary Jones, whom we found engraving, ſeems to have been rather pleaſing than beautiful. She is thin and pale, but a pair of the fineſt black eyes I ever ſaw, animate, to a great degree, a countenance, which ſickneſs has done its utmoſt to render languid, but has, perhaps, only made more delicate and amiable. Her perſon is exquiſitely

genteel, and her voice, in common ſpeech, enchantingly melodious.

Mrs. Morgan, the lady who was drawing, appears to be upwards of fifty, tall, rather plump, and extremely majeſtic, an air of dignity diſtinguiſhes her perſon, and every virtue is engraven in indelible characters on her countenance. There is a benignity in every look, which renders the decline of life, if poſſible, more amiable that the bloom of youth. One would almoſt think nature had formed her for a common parent, ſuch univerſal and tender benevolence beams from every glance ſhe caſts around her.

The dreſs of the ladies was thus far uniform, the ſame neatneſs, the ſame ſimplicity and cleanlineſs appeared in each, and they were all in luteſtring night-gowns, though of different colours, nor was there any thing unfaſhionable in their appearance, except that they were free from any trumpery ornaments. The girls were all clothed in camblet coats, but not uniform in colour, their linnen extremely white and clean though courſe. Some of them were pretty, and none had any defect in perſon, to take off from that general pleaſingneſs which attends youth and innocence.

They had been taught ſuch an habit of attention, that they ſeemed not at all diſturbed by our converſation, which was of that general kind, as might naturally be expected on ſuch an occaſion, though ſupported by the ladies with more ſenſible vivacity and politeneſs, than is uſual, where part of the company are ſuch total ſtrangers to the reſt; till by chance one of the ladies called Mrs. Maynard by her name.

From the moment I ſaw her, I thought her face not unknown to me, but could not recollect where, or when I had been acquainted with her, but her

name

name brought to my recollection, that she was not only an old acquaintance, but a near relation. I observed, that she had looked on me with particular attention, and I begged her to give me leave to ask her, of what family of Maynards she was? her answer confirmed my supposition, and as she told me, that she believed she had some remembrance of my face, I soon made her recollect our affinity and former intimacy, though my twenty years abode in Jamaica, the alteration the climate had wrought in me, and time had made in us both, had almost effaced us from each other's memory.

There is great pleasure in renewing the acquaintance of our youth; a thousand pleasing ideas accompany it; many mirthful scenes and juvenile amusements return to the remembrance, and make us, as it were, live over again what is generally the most pleasing part of life. Mrs. Maynard seemed no less sensible of the satisfaction arising from this train of thoughts than myself, and the rest of the company were so indulgently good-natured, as in appearance, to share them with us. The tea table by no means interrupted our conversation, and I believe I should have forgot that our journey was not at an end, if a servant had not brought in word, that my man, who had observed our motions, was come to inform us, that our chaise could not be repaired that night.

The ladies immediately declared, that though their equipage was in order, they would not suffer it to put an end to a pleasure they owed to the accident which had happened to ours, and insisted we should give them our company till the smith had made all necessary reparations, adding, that I could not be obstinately bent on depriving Mrs. Maynard so soon of the satisfaction she received, from having recovered so long lost a relation. I was little in-

clined to reject this invitation: pleaſure was the chief deſign of my journey, and I ſaw not how I could receive more, than by remaining in a family ſo extraordinary, and ſo perfectly agreeable. When both parties are well agreed, the neceſſary ceremonies previous to a compliance are ſoon over, and it was ſettled that we ſhould not think of departing before the next day at ſooneſt.

The continuance of the rain rendered it impoſſible to ſtir out of the houſe; my couſin, who ſeemed to think variety neceſſary to amuſe, aſked if we loved muſic? which being anſwered in the affirmative, ſhe begged the other ladies to entertain us with one of their family concerts, and we joining in the petition, proper orders were given, and we adjourned into another room, which was well furniſhed with muſical inſtruments. Over the door was a beautiful ſaint Cecilia, painted in crayons by Mrs. Mancel, and a fine piece of carved work over the chimney, done by Mrs. Trentham, which was a very artificial repreſentation of every ſort of muſical inſtruments.

While we were admiring theſe performances, the company took their reſpective places. Mrs. Mancel ſeated herſelf at the harpſichord, Lady Mary Jones played on the arch lute, Mrs. Morgan on the organ, Mrs. Selvyn and Mrs. Trentham each on the ſix-ſtringed baſs; the ſhepherd who had charmed us in the field was there with his German flute; a venerable looking man, who is their ſteward, played on the violincello, a lame youth on the French horn, another, who ſeemed very near blind, on the baſſoon, and two on the fiddle. My couſin had no ſhare in the performance except ſinging agreeably, wherein ſhe was joined by ſome of the ladies, and where the muſic could bear it, by ten of the young girls, with two or three

three others whom we had not ſeen, and whoſe voices and manner were equally pleaſing. They performed ſeveral of the fineſt pieces of the Meſſiah and Judas Maccabeus, with exquiſite taſte, and the moſt exact time. There was a ſufficient number of performers to give the choruſes all their pomp and fullneſs, and the ſongs were ſung in a manner ſo touching and pathetic, as could be equalled by none, whoſe hearts were not as much affected by the words, as their ſenſes were by the muſic. The ſight of ſo many little innocents joining in the moſt ſublime harmony, made me almoſt think myſelf already amongſt the heavenly choir, and it was a great mortification to me to be brought back to this ſenſual world, by ſo groſs an attraction as a call to ſupper, which put an end to our concert, and carried us to another room, where we found a repaſt more elegant than expenſive.

The evening certainly is the moſt ſocial part of the day, without any of thoſe exceſſes which ſo often turn it into ſenſeleſs revelry. The converſation after ſupper was particularly animated, and left us ſtill more charmed with the ſociety into which chance had introduced us; the ſprightlineſs of their wit, the juſtneſs of their reflexions, the dignity which accompanied their vivacity, plainly evinced with how much greater ſtrength the mind can exert itſelf in a regular and rational way of life, than in a courſe of diſſipation. At this houſe every change came too ſoon, time ſeemed to wear a double portion of wings, eleven o'clock ſtruck, and the ladies ordered a ſervant to ſhew us our rooms, themſelves retiring to theirs.

It was impoſſible for Lamont and I to part till we had ſpent an hour in talking over this amiable family, with whom he could not help being much delighted, though he obſerved, 'they were very

'deficient

'deficient in the bon ton, there was too much 'ſolidity in all they ſaid, they would trifle with 'trifles indeed, but had not the art of treating more 'weighty ſubjects with the ſame lightneſs, which 'gave them an air of ruſticity; and he did not 'doubt, but on a more intimate acquaintance we 'ſhould find their manners much ruſticated, and 'their heads filled with antiquated notions, by 'having lived ſo long out of the great world.'

I roſe the next morning very early, deſirous to make the day, which I purpoſed for the laſt of my abode in this manſion, as long as I could. I went directly into the garden, which, by what I ſaw from the houſe, was extremely pretty. As I paſſed by the windows of the ſaloon, I perceived the ladies and their little pupils were earlier riſers than myſelf, for they were all at their various employments. I firſt went into the gayeſt flower garden I ever beheld. The rainbow exhibits not half the variety of tints, and they are ſo artfully mingled, and ranged to make ſuch a harmony of colours, as taught me how much the moſt beautiful objects may be improved by a judicious diſpoſition of them. Beyond theſe beds of flowers riſes a ſhrubbery, where every thing ſweet and pleaſing is collected. As theſe ladies have no taſte but what is directed by good ſenſe, nothing found a place here from being only uncommon, for they think few things are very rare but becauſe they are little deſirable; and indeed it is plain they are free from that littleneſs of mind, which makes people value a thing the more for its being poſſeſſed by no one but themſelves. Behind the ſhrubbery is a little wood, which affords a gloom, rendered more agreable by its contraſt with the dazzling beauty of that part of the garden that leads to it. In the high pale which encloſes this wood I obſerved a little door; curioſity

ſity induced me to paſs through it; I found it opened on a row of the neateſt cottages I ever ſaw, which the wood had concealed from my view. They were new and uniform, and therefore I imagined all dedicated to the ſame purpoſe. Seeing a very old woman ſpinning at one of the doors, I accoſted her, by admiring the neatneſs of her habitation.

'Ay, indeed, ſaid ſhe, it is a moſt comfortable 'place, God bleſs the good ladies! I and my neigh-'bours are as happy as princeſſes, we have every 'thing we want and wiſh, and who can ſay more?'

'Very few ſo much, anſwered I, 'but pray what 'ſhare have the ladies in procuring the happineſs 'you ſeem ſo ſenſible of.'

'Why Sir, continued the old woman, it is 'all owing to them. I was almoſt ſtarved when 'they put me into this houſe, and no ſhame of 'mine, for ſo were my neighbours too; perhaps 'we were not ſo pains-taking as we might have 'been; but that was not our faults, you know, as 'we had not things to work with, nor any body 'to ſet us to work, poor folks cannot know every 'thing as theſe good ladies do; we were half dead 'for want of victuals, and then people have not 'courage to ſet about any thing. Nay, all the 'pariſh were ſo when they came into it, young 'and old, there was not much to chuſe, few of 'us had rags to cover us, or a morſel of bread 'to eat, except the two 'Squires; they indeed grew 'rich, becauſe they had our work, and paid us not 'enough to keep life and ſoul together; they live 'above a mile off, ſo perhaps they did not know 'how poor we were, I muſt ſay that for them; 'the ladies tell me I ought not to ſpeak againſt 'them, for every one has faults, only we ſee other 'peoples, and are blind to our own; and certainly

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'it is true enough, for they are very wiſe ladies 'as well as good, and muſt know ſuch things.'

As my new acquaintance ſeemed as loquacious as her age promiſed, I hoped for full ſatisfaction, and aſked her, 'How ſhe and her neighbours employed 'themſelves?' 'Not all alike, replied the good 'woman, I will tell you, all about it. There are 'twelve of us that live here. We have every one 'a houſe of two rooms, as you may ſee, beſide 'other conveniences, and each a little garden, but 'though we are ſeparate, we agree as well, per-'haps better, than if we lived together, and all 'help one another. Now, there is neighbour 'Suſan, and neighbour Rachel; Suſan is lame, 'ſo ſhe ſpins cloaths for Rachel; and Rachel 'cleans Suſan's houſe, and does ſuch things for her 'as ſhe cannot do for herſelf. The ladies ſettled 'all theſe matters at firſt, and told us, that as they, 'to pleaſe God, aſſiſted us, we muſt in order to 'pleaſe him ſerve others; and that to make us happy 'they would put us in a way, poor as we are, to 'do good to many. Thus neighbour Jane, who 'poor woman is almoſt ſtone deaf, they thought 'would have a melancholy life if ſhe was to be al-'ways ſpinning and knitting, ſeeing other people 'around her talking, and not be able to hear a word 'they ſaid, ſo the ladies buſy her in making broths 'and caudles, and ſuch things, for all the ſick poor 'in this and the next pariſh, and two of us are 'fixed upon to carry what they have made to thoſe 'that want them; to viſit them often, and ſpend 'more or leſs time with them every day accord-'ing as they have, or have not relations to take 'care of them; for though the ladies always hire 'nurſes for thoſe who are very ill, yet they will 'not truſt quite to them, but make us overlook

'them,

'them, ſo that in a ſickly time we ſhall be all day 'going from one to another.'

'But, ſaid I, there are I perceive many chil- 'dren amongſt you, how happens that? your 'ages ſhew they are not your own.'

'Oh! as for that, replied my intelligencer, I 'will tell you how that is. You muſt know theſe 'good ladies, heaven preſerve them! take every 'child after the fifth of every poor perſon, as 'ſoon as it can walk, till when they pay the 'mother for nurſing it; theſe children they ſend 'to us to keep out of harm, and as ſoon as they 'can hold a knitting-needle to teach them to knit, 'and to ſpin, as much as they can be taught before 'they are four or five years old, when they are re- 'moved into one of the ſchools. They are pretty 'company for us, and make us mothers again, as it 'were, in our old age; then the childrens rela- 'tions are all ſo fond of us for our care of them, 'that it makes us a power of friends, which you 'know is very pleaſant, though we want nothing 'from them but their good wills.'

Here I interrupted her by obſerving, that it muſt take up a great deal of time, and ſtop their work, conſequently leſſen their profits.

'There is nothing in that, continued the good 'woman, the ladies ſteward ſends us in all we 'want in the way of meat, drink, and firing; 'and our ſpinning we carry to the ladies; they 'employ a poor old weaver, who before they came 'broke for want of work, to weave it for us, and 'when there is not enough they put more to it, ſo 'we are ſure to have our cloathing; if we are not 'idle that is all they deſire, except that we ſhould 'be cleanly too. There never paſſes a day that one 'or other of the ladies does not come and look 'all over our houſes, which they tell us, and cer-

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'tainly with truth, for it is a great deal of trouble to 'them, is all for our good, for that we cannot be 'healthy if we are not clean and neat. Then 'every ſaint's day, and every Sunday after church, 'we all go down to the hall, and the ladies read 'prayers, and a ſermon to us, and their own family; 'nor do they ever come here without giving us 'ſome good advice. We uſed to quarrel, to be 'ſure, ſometimes when we firſt came to theſe 'houſes, but the ladies condeſcended to make it 'up amongſt us, and ſhewed us ſo kindly how 'much it was our duty to agree together, and to 'forgive every body their faults, or elſe we could not 'hope to be forgiven by God, againſt whom we 'ſo often ſinned, that now we love one another 'like ſiſters, or indeed better, for I often ſee ſuch 'quarrel. Beſide, they have taught us that we are 'generally in fault ourſelves; and we find now 'that we take care not to be perverſe, our neigh-'bours are ſeldom in the wrong, and when they 'are, we bear with it in hopes they will bear with 'us when we are as much to blame, which we 'may be ſure enough will happen, let us try ever 'ſo much to the contrary. Then the ladies ſeem 'ſo pleaſed when we do any kindneſs to one ano-'ther, as to be ſure is a great encouragement; and 'if any of us are ſick they are ſo careful and ſo 'good, that it would be a ſhame if we did not do 'all we can for one another, who have been always 'neighbours and acquaintance, when ſuch great 'ladies, who never knew us, as I may ſay, but 'to make us happy, and have no reaſon to take 'care of us but that we are poor, are ſo kind and 'condeſcending to us.'

I was ſo pleaſed with the good effect which the charity of her benefactors had on the mind, as well as the ſituation of this old woman, whoſe neighbours

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by her own account were equally benefitted by the bleſſings they received, that I ſhould have ſtayed longer with her, if a bell had not rang at Millenium Hall, which ſhe informed me was a ſummons to breakfaſt. I obeyed its call, and after thanking her for her converſation, returned with a heart warmed and enlarged, to the amiable ſociety. My mind was ſo filled with exalted reflections on their virtues, that I was leſs attentive to the charms of inanimate nature than when I firſt paſſed through the gardens.

After breakfaſt the ladies propoſed a walk, and as they had ſeen the courſe I took when I firſt went out, they led us a contrary way, leſt, they ſaid, I ſhould be tired with the repetition of the ſame ſcene. I told them with great truth, that 'what I had beheld could never weary, for virtue is a ſubject we muſt ever contemplate with freſh delight, and as ſuch examples could not fail of improving every witneſs of them, the pleaſure of reflection would encreaſe, as one daily grew more capable of enjoying it, by cultivating kindred ſenſations.' By ſome more explicit hints they found out to what I alluded, and thereby knew where I had been, but turning the converſation to preſent objects, they conducted us to a very fine wood, which is laid out with ſo much taſte, that Lamont obſerved the artiſt's hand was never more diſtinguiſhable, and perceived in various ſpots the direction of the perſon at preſent moſt famous for that ſort of improvement.

The ladies ſmiled, and one of them anſwered, 'He did their wood great honour, in thinking art had lent her aſſiſtance to nature, but that there was little in that place for which they were not ſolely obliged to the latter.' Mrs. Trentham interrupted her who was ſpeaking, and told us, that, 'As ſhe had

'had no ſhare in the improvements which had been 'made, ſhe might with the better grace aſſure Mr. 'Lamont, that lady Mary Jones, Mrs. Mancel, and 'Mrs. Morgan, were the only perſons who had laid 'out that wood, and the commoneſt labourers in 'the country had executed their orders.' Lamont was much ſurprized at this piece of information, and though he would have thought it ſtill more exquiſitely beautiful had it been the deſign of the perſon he imagined, yet truth is ſo powerful, that he could not ſuppreſs his admiration and ſurprize. Every cut in it is terminated by ſome noble object. In ſeveral places are ſeats formed with ſuch ruſtic ſimplicity, as have more real grandeur in them, than can be found in the moſt expenſive buildings. On an eminence, 'boſomed high in tufted trees,' is a temple dedicated to ſolitude. The ſtructure is an exquiſite piece of architecture, the proſpect from it noble and extenſive, and the windows ſo placed, that one ſees no houſe but at ſo conſiderable a diſtance, as not to take off from that ſolitary air, which is perfectly agreable to a temple declaredly dedicated to ſolitude. The moſt beautiful object in the view is a very large river, in reality an arm of the ſea, little more than a quarter of a mile diſtant from the building; about three miles beyond it lies the ſea, on which the ſun then ſhone, and made it dazzlingly bright. In the temple is a picture of Contemplation, another of Silence, two of various birds and animals, and a couple of moon-light pieces, the workmanſhip of the ladies.

Cloſe by the temple runs a gentle murmuring rivulet, which flows in meanders through the reſt of the wood, ſometimes concealed from view, and then appearing at the next turning of the walk. The wood is well peopled with pheaſants, wild turkies, ſquirrels and hares, who live ſo unmoleſted, that they

they ſeem to have forgot all fear, and rather to welcome than fly thoſe who come amongſt them. Man never appears there as a mercileſs deſtroyer; but the preſerver, inſtead of the tyrant of the inferior part of the creation. While they continue in that wood, none but natural evil can approach them, and from that they are defended as much as poſſible. We there 'walked joint tenant of the ſhade,' with the animal race; and a perfect equality in nature's bounty ſeems enjoyed by the whole creation. One could ſcarcely forbear thinking thoſe happy times were come, when 'The wolf ſhall dwell with the 'lamb, and the leopard ſhall lye down with the 'kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the 'fatling together, and a young child ſhall lead 'them. The wilderneſs and the ſolitary place 'ſhall be glad for them, and the deſart ſhall rejoice, 'and bloſſom as the roſe.'

At the verge of this wood, which extends to the river I have mentioned, without perceiving we were entering a building, ſo well is the outſide of it concealed by trees, we found ourſelves in a moſt beautiful grotto, made of foſſils, ſpars, coral, and ſuch ſhells, as are at once both fine and ruſtic; all of the glaring, tawdry kind are excluded, and by the gloom and ſimplicity preſerved, one would imagine it the habitation of ſome devout anchoret. Ivy and moſs in ſome places cover, while they ſeem to unite, the ſeveral materials of the variegated walls. The rivulet which runs through the wood, falls down one ſide of the grotto with great rapidity, broken into various ſtreams by the ſpar and coral, and paſſing through, forms a fine caſcade juſt at the foot of the grotto, from whence it flows into the river. Great care is taken to prevent the place from growing damp, ſo that we ſat

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ſome time in it with ſafety, admiring the ſmooth ſurface of the river, to which it lies very open.

As the ladies had ſome daily buſineſs on their hands which they never neglect, we were obliged to leave this lovely ſcene, where I think I could have paſſed my life with pleaſure, and to return towards the houſe, though by a different way from that we came, traverſing the other ſide of the wood. In one ſpot where we went near the verge, I obſerved a pale, which, upon examination, I found was continued for ſome acres, though it was remarkable only in one place. It is painted green, and on the inſide a hedge of yews, laurel, and other thick evergreens, riſe to about ſeven or eight feet high. I could not forbear aſking what was thus ſo carefully encloſed? the ladies ſmiled on each other, but evaded anſwering my queſtion, which only encreaſed my curioſity. Lamont, not leſs curious, and more importunate, obſerved, that 'the incloſure bore ſome reſemblance to one of 'Lord Lamore's, where he kept lions, tygers, 'leopards, and ſuch foreign animals, and he would 'he hanged, if the ladies had not made ſome ſuch 'collection, intreating that he might be admitted 'to ſee them; for nothing gave him greater entertainment than to behold thoſe beautiful wild 'beaſts, brought out of their native woods, where 'they had reigned as kings, and here tamed and 'ſubjected by the ſuperior art of man. It was a 'triumph of human reaſon, which could not fail 'to afford great pleaſure.'

'Not to us, I aſſure you, Sir, replied Mrs. 'Mancel, when reaſon appears only in the exertion of cruelty and tyrannical oppreſſion, it is 'ſurely not a gift to be boaſted of. When a man 'forces the furious ſteed to endure the bit, or 'breaks oxen to the yoke, the great benefits he re-

'ceives

'ceives from, and communicates to the animals, 'excuſes the forcible methods by which it is ac- 'compliſhed. But to ſee a man, from a vain deſire 'to have in his poſſeſſion the native of another 'climate and another country, reduce a fine and 'noble creature to miſery, and confine him within 'narrow incloſures whoſe happineſs conſiſted in 'unbounded liberty, ſhocks my nature. There 'is I confeſs ſomething ſo amiable in gentleneſs, 'that I could be pleaſed with ſeeing a tyger careſs 'its keeper, if the cruel means by which the 'fierceſt of beaſts is taught all the ſervility of a 'fawning ſpaniel, did not recur every inſtant to 'my mind; and it is not much leſs abhorrent to 'my nature, to ſee a venerable lion jumping over 'a ſtick, than it would be to behold an hoary phi- 'loſopher forced by ſome cruel tyrant to ſpend his 'days in whipping a top, or playing with a rattle. 'Every thing to me looſes its charm when it is put 'out of that ſtation wherein nature, or to ſpeak 'more properly, the all-wiſe Creator has placed it. 'I imagine man has a right to uſe the animal race 'for his own preſervation, perhaps for his conveni- 'ence, but certainly not to treat them with wanton 'cruelty, and as it is not in his power to give them 'any thing ſo valuable as their liberty, it is, in 'my opinion, criminal to enſlave them, in order 'to procure ourſelves a vain amuſement, if we 'have ſo little feeling as to find any while others 'ſuffer.'

'I believe madam, replied Lamont, it is moſt 'adviſeable for me not to attempt to defend what 'I have ſaid; ſhould I have reaſon on my ſide, 'while you have humanity on yours, I ſhould make 'but a bad figure in the argument. What advan- 'tage could I expect from applying to the under- 'ſtanding, while your amiable diſpoſition would

'captivate

'captivate even reaſon itſelf? but ſtill I am puz-
'zled; what we behold is certainly an incloſure,
'how can that be without a confinement to thoſe
'that are within it?'

'After having ſpoken ſo much againſt tyranny,
'ſaid Mrs. Mancel ſmiling, I do not know whe-
'ther I ſhould be excuſable, if I left you to be ty-
'rannized by curioſity, which I believe can inflict
'very ſevere pains, at leaſt, if I may be allowed to
'judge by the means people often take to ſatisfy it.
'I will therefore gratify you with the knowledge of
'what is within this incloſure, which makes ſo ex-
'traordinary an impreſſion upon you. It is, then,
'an aſylum for thoſe poor creatures who are ren-
'dered miſerable from ſome natural deficiency or
'redundancy. Here they find refuge from the ty-
'ranny of thoſe wretches, who ſeem to think that
'being two or three feet taller gives them a right
'to make them a property, and expoſe their un-
'happy forms to the contemptuous curioſity of the
'unthinking multitude. Procruſtes has been brand-
'ed through all ages with the name of tyrant;
'and principally, as it appears, from fitting the
'body of every ſtranger to a bed which he kept as
'the neceſſary ſtandard, cutting off the legs of
'thoſe whoſe height exceeded the length of it,
'and ſtretching on the rack ſuch as fell ſhort of
'that meaſure, till they attained the requiſite pro-
'portion. But is not almoſt every man a Pro-
'cruſtes? we have not the power of ſhewing our
'cruelty exactly in the ſame method, but actuated
'by the like ſpirit, we abridge of their liberty,
'and torment by ſcorn, all who either fall ſhort,
'or exceed the uſual ſtandard, if they happen to
'have the additional misfortune of poverty. Per-
'haps we are in no part more ſuſceptible than in our
'vanity, how much then muſt thoſe poor wretches

'ſuffer,

'ſuffer, whoſe deformity would lead them to wiſh 'to be ſecluded from human view, in being ex-'poſed to the public, whoſe obſervations are no 'better than expreſſions of ſcorn, and who are ſur-'prized to find that any thing leſs than themſelves 'can ſpeak, or appear like intelligent beings: 'But this is only part of what they have to en-'dure. As if their deficiency in height deprived 'them of the natural right to air and ſunſhine, 'they are kept confined in ſmall rooms, and becauſe 'they fill leſs ſpace than common, are ſtuffed into 'chairs ſo little, that they are ſqueezed as cloſe as a 'pair of gloves in a walnut-ſhell.

'This miſerable treatment of perſons, to whom 'compaſſion ſhould ſecure more than common in-'dulgence, determined us to purchaſe theſe worſt 'ſort of ſlaves, and in this place we have five who 'owed their wretchedneſs to being only three foot 'high, one grey-headed toothleſs old man of ſixteen 'years of age, a woman of about ſeven foot in 'height, and a man who would be ſtill taller, if 'the extreme weakneſs of his body, and the 'wretched life he for ſome time led, in the hands 'of one of theſe monſter-mongers, did not make 'him bend almoſt double, and oblige him to walk 'on crutches; with which infirmities he is well 'pleaſed, as they reduce him nearer the common 'ſtandard.'

We were very deſirous of ſeeing this enfran-chiſed company; but Mrs. Morgan told us it was what they ſeldom granted, for fear of inflicting ſome of the pains from which they had endeavour-ed to reſcue thoſe poor creatures, but ſhe would ſtep in, and aſk if they had no objection to our ad-miſſion, and if that appeared really the caſe ſhe would gratify us.

This tenderneſs to perſons who were under ſuch high obligations, charmed me. She ſoon returned with the permiſſion we wiſhed, but intreated us to pay all our attention to the houſe and garden, and to take no more than a civil notice of its inhabitants. We promiſed obedience, and followed her. Her advice was almoſt unneceſſary, for the place could not have failed of attracting our particular obſervation. It was a quadrangle of about ſix acres, and the inward part was divided by nets into eight parts, four of which alternatively were filled with poultry of all ſorts, which were fed here for the uſe of the hall, and kept with the moſt exact cleanlineſs. The other four parts were filled with ſhrubs and flowers, which were cultivated with great delight by theſe once unfortunate, but now happy beings. A little ſtream ran acroſs the quadrangle, which ſerved for drink to the poultry, and facilitated the watering of the flowers. I have already ſaid, that at the inward edge of the pale was a row of ever-greens; at their feet were beds of flowers, and a little gravel walk went round the whole. At each corner was an arbour made with woodbines and jeſſamine, in one or two of which there was always an agreeable ſhade.

At one ſide of the quadrangle was a very neat habitation, into which a dwarf invited us to enter, to reſt ourſelves after our walk; they were all paſſing backwards and forwards, and thus gave us a full view of them, which would have been a ſhocking ſight, but for the reflexions we could not avoid making on their happy condition, and the very extraordinary humanity of the ladies to whom they owed it; ſo that inſtead of feeling the pain one might naturally receive from ſeeing the human form ſo diſgraced, we were filled with admiration of the human mind, when ſo nobly exalted by virtue,

tue, as it is in the patroneſſes of theſe poor creatures, who wore an air of chearfulneſs, which ſhewed they thought the churliſhneſs wherewith they had been treated by nature ſufficiently compenſated. The tender inquiries the ladies made after their healths, and the kind notice they took of each of them, could not be exceeded by any thing but the affection, I might almoſt ſay adoration, with which theſe people beheld their benefactreſſes.

This ſcene had made too deep an impreſſion on our minds, not to be the ſubject of our diſcourſe all the way home, and in the courſe of converſation, I learnt, that when theſe people were firſt reſcued out of their miſery, their healths were much impaired, and their tempers more ſo: to reſtore the firſt, all medicinal care was taken, and air and exerciſe aſſiſted greatly in their recovery; but to cure the malady of the mind, and conquer that internal ſource of unhappineſs, was a work of longer time. Even theſe poor wretches had their vanity, and would contend for ſuperior merit, of which, the argument was the money their keepers had gained in exhibiting them. To put an end to this contention, the ladies made them underſtand, that what they thought a ſubject for boaſting, was only a proof of their being ſo much farther from the uſual ſtandard of the human form, and therefore a more extraordinary ſpectacle. But it was long before one of them could be perſuaded to lay aſide her pretenſions to ſuperiority, which ſhe claimed on account of an extraordinary honour ſhe had received from a great princeſs, who had made her a preſent of a ſedan chair.

At length, however, much reaſoning and perſuaſion, a conviction of principles, of which they had before no knowledge, the happineſs of their

ſituation, and the improvement of their healths, concurred to ſweeten their tempers, and they now live in great harmony. They are entirely miſtreſſes of their houſe, have two maids to wait on them, over whom they have ſole command, and a perſon to do ſuch little things in their garden as they cannot themſelves perform; but the cultivation of it is one of their great pleaſures; and by their extraordinary care, they have the ſatisfaction of preſenting the fineſt flowers of the ſpring to their benefactreſſes, before they are blown in any other place.

When they firſt came, the ladies told us, that the horror they had conceived of being exhibited as public ſpectacles, had fixed in them ſuch a fear of being ſeen by any ſtranger, that the ſound of a voice, with which they were not acquainted at the outſide of the pailing, or the trampling of feet, would ſet them all a running behind the buſhes to hide themſelves, like ſo many timorous partridges in a mew, hurrying behind ſheaves of corn for ſhelter; they even found a convenience in their ſize, which, though it rendered them unwilling to be ſeen, enabled them ſo eaſily to find places for concealment.

By degrees the ladies brought them to conſent to ſee their head ſervants, and ſome of the beſt people in the pariſh; deſiring, that to render it more agreeable to their viſitors, they would entertain them with fruit and wine; adviſing them to aſſiſt their neighbours in plain work; thus to endear themſelves to them, and procure more frequent viſits, which as they choſe to confine themſelves within ſo narrow a compaſs, and enjoyed but precarious health, their benefactreſſes thought a neceſſary amuſement. Theſe recommendations, and the incidents wherewith their former lives had furniſhed them to amuſe their company, and which they

now

now could relate with pleaſure, from the happy ſenſe that all mortifications were paſt, rendered their converſation much courted among that rank of people.

It occurred to me, that their diſlike to being ſeen by numbers, muſt prevent their attendance on public worſhip, but my couſin informed me that was thus avoided. There was in the church an old gallery, which from diſuſe was grown out of repair; this the ladies cauſed to be mended, and the front of it ſo hightened, that theſe little folks when in it could not be ſeen; the tall ones contrived by ſtooping when they were there, not to appear of any extraordinary height: To this they were conveyed in the ladies coach, and ſet down cloſe to covered ſtairs, which led up to the gallery.

This ſubject employed our converſation till we approached the hall; the ladies then, after inſiſting that we ſhould not think of going from thence that day, all left us except Mrs. Maynard. It may ſeem ſtrange that I was not ſorry for their departure; but, in truth, I was ſo filled with aſtoniſhment, at characters ſo new, and ſo curious to know by what ſteps women thus qualified both by nature and fortune to have the world almoſt at command, were brought thus to ſeclude themſelves from it, and make as it were a new one for themſelves, conſtituted on ſuch very different principles from that I had hitherto lived in, that I longed to be alone with my couſin, in hopes I might from her receive ſome account of this wonder. I ſoon made my curioſity known, and beſeeched her to gratify it.

'I ſee no good reaſon, ſaid ſhe, why I ſhould 'not comply with your requeſt, as my friends are 'above wiſhing to conceal any part of their lives,

'though themſelves are never the ſubject of their 'own converſation. If they have had any follies 'they do not deſire to hide them; they have not 'pride enough to be hurt with candid criticiſms, 'and have too much innocence to fear any very 'ſevere cenſures. But as we did not all reach 'this paradiſe at the ſame time, I ſhall begin with 'the firſt inhabitants of, and indeed the founders 'of this ſociety, Mrs. Mancel and Mrs. Morgan, 'who from their childhood have been ſo connected, 'that I could not, if I would, diſunite them in my 'relation; and it would be almoſt a ſin to endea-'vour to ſeparate them even in idea.'

We ſat down in an arbour, whoſe ſhade invited us to ſeek there a defence againſt the ſun, which was then in its meridian, and ſhone with uncommon heat. The woodbines, the roſes, the jeſſamines, the pinks, and above all, the minionette with which it was ſurrounded, made the air one general perfume; every breeze came loaded with fragrance, ſtealing and giving odour. A rivulet ran bubbling by the ſide of the arbour, whoſe gentle murmours ſoothed the mind into compoſure, and ſeemed to huſh us to attention, when Mrs. Maynard thus began, to ſhew her readineſs to comply with my requeſt.

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THE HISTORY OF Miſs MANCEL, AND Mrs. MORGAN.

YOU may perhaps think I am preſuming on your patience, when I lead you into a nurſery, or a boarding-ſchool; but the life of Louiſa Mancel, was ſo early chequered with that various fate, which gives this world the motley appearance of joy and ſorrow, pain and pleaſure, that it is not in my power to paſs over the events of her infancy. I ſhall, however, ſpare you all that is poſſible, and recommend her to your notice only when ſhe attracted the obſervation of Mr. Hintman. This gentleman hearing that a perſon who rented ſome land of him was come to London, and lodged at one of thoſe public houſes which by the landlord is called an inn, at the out-ſkirts of London, on the Surry-ſide; and having ſome occa-

ſion to ſpeak to him, he went thither. The people of the houſe called the man Mr. Hintman enquired for, who immediately came down ſtairs, wiping tears from his eyes; the continuance of which he could hardly reſtrain. Mr. Hintman aſking the reaſon of thoſe appearances of ſorrow, the good-natured old man told him, his viſit had called him from a ſcene which had ſhocked him exceſſively. 'The firſt day I came here, ſaid he, 'I was induced by the frequent groans which iſſued 'from the next chamber, to enquire who lodged 'there; I learnt, it was a gentlewoman, who ar-'rived the day before, and was immediately taken 'ſo ill that they apprehended her life in danger; 'and, about two hours ago, the maid of the houſe 'ran into my room, begging me to come to her 'aſſiſtance, for the gentlewoman was in ſuch ſtrong 'fits, ſhe was not able to hold her. I obeyed the 'ſummons, and found the poor woman in fits in-'deed; but what appeared to me the laſt agonies 'of a life, which near exhauſted, laviſhes away its 'ſmall remains in ſtrong convulſions.

'By her bed-ſide ſtood the moſt beautiful child I 'ever beheld, in appearance about ten years of 'age, crying as if its little heart would break; not 'with the rage of an infant, but with the ſettled 'grief of a perſon mature both in years and afflicti-'on. I aſked her if the poor dying woman was 'her mother; ſhe told me, no,—ſhe was only her 'aunt; but to her the ſame as a mother; and ſhe 'did not know any one elſe that would take care 'of her.

'After a time the poor woman's convulſions left 'her;—ſhe juſt recovered ſenſe enough to embrace 'the lovely girl, and cried out, Oh! my dear child, 'what will become of you! a friendleſs, helpleſs in-'fant; and ſeeing me at her bed-ſide, ſhe lifted up

'her

'her hands in a ſuppliant poſture; and with eyes
'that petitioned in ſtronger terms than words could
'expreſs, Oh! Sir, ſaid ſhe, though you are a ſtran-
'ger to me, yet I ſee you are not ſo to humanity;
'—take pity on this forlorn child;—her amiable diſ-
'poſition will repay you in this world,—and the
'great Father of us all will reward you in the next,
'for your compaſſion on a wretched friendleſs
'girl!—but why do I call her friendleſs!—her
'innocence has the beſt of friends in heaven;—the
'Almighty is a parent ſhe is not left to ſeek for;
'he is never abſent;—Oh! bleſſed Lord!—cried
'ſhe, with a degree of extacy and confidence,
'which moſt ſenſibly affected us all,—to thy care I
'reſign her;—thy tender mercies are over all thy
'works,—and thou, who careſt for the ſmalleſt part
'of thy creation, will not deny her thy protection.
'Oh! Lord defend her innocence!—let her obtain
'a place in thy kingdom after death; and,—for all
'the reſt—I ſubmit to thy providence; nor pre-
'ſumptuouſly pretend, to dictate to ſupreme wiſdom.
'Thou art a gracious father;—and the afflictions
'thou ſendeſt are—— Here her voice failed her;
'—but, by her geſtures, we could perceive ſhe con-
'tinued praying; and, having before taken the
'child in her arms;—the little angel continued
'there for fear of diſturbing her.—By looks
'ſometimes turned towards the poor infant, and
'ſometimes with her hand on her own heart, and
'then her eyes lifted up as it were to heaven,
'we ſaw ſhe mixed prayers for the little mourner,
'with interceſſions for herſelf, till ſenſe and mo-
'tion ſeemed to fail her; ſhe then fell into a
'convulſion, and expired.

'The little girl perceived ſhe was dead; and
'became, almoſt as ſenſeleſs, as the lump of
'clay which had ſo lately been her only friend.

'We had but juſt taken her from the body 'ſir, when you came; and this was the oc-'caſion of the emotions you obſerved in me.

'The cauſe was indeed ſufficient, replied Mr. 'Hintman, but I am glad your ſorrow proceeded 'from nothing more immediately concerning your-'ſelf:—Miſery will ſtrike its arrows into a hu-'mane heart; but the wounds it makes are not ſo 'laſting, as thoſe which are impreſſed by paſſions 'that are more relative to ourſelves.—Oh ſir,— 'ſaid the old man,—you cannot form an ade-'quate idea of the effect this ſcene muſt have on 'every ſpectator, except you had ſeen the child! 'ſurely nature never formed ſo lovely a little crea-'ture!' He continued his praiſes of Louiſa, till at length he excited Mr. Hintman's curioſity; who expreſſing a deſire of ſeeing this miracle, he was carried up into the good man's room, to which they had removed her. She, who had cried moſt bitterly before the fatal ſtroke arrived, was now ſo oppreſſed, as not to be able to ſhed a tear. They had put her on the bed, where ſhe lay ſighing with a heart ready to break; her eyes fixed on one point, ſhe neither ſaw nor heard.

Though her countenance expreſſed unutterable woe, yet ſhe looked ſo extremely beautiful, that Mr. Hintman, highly as his expectation had been raiſed, was ſtruck with ſurprize. He allowed he never ſaw any thing ſo lovely; and the charms of which her melancholy might deprive her, were more than compenſated in his imagination by ſo ſtrong a proof of extreme ſenſibility, at an age when few children perceive half the dreadful conſequences of ſuch a misfortune.

He adviſed that ſhe ſhould be blooded, to prevent any ill effects from ſo ſevere a ſhock; for as ſhe felt it as ſtrongly as one of a more mature age,

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the ſame precautions ſhould be uſed. In this he was obeyed; and it gave her ſuch relief that ſhe burſt into a flood of tears; a change which appeared ſo ſalutary, that Mr. Hintman would not immediately interrupt her. But his curioſity did not ſuffer him long to forbear aſking her name, and many other particulars; ſeveral of which ſhe could not anſwer;—all the account ſhe was able to give of herſelf was, that 'her name was Mancel; 'that the perſon for whom ſhe grieved was her 'aunt; but had had the ſole care of her from her 'earlieſt remembrance. This aunt, ſhe ſaid, 'had often told her ſhe had a father and mother 'living; but when ſhe enquired why ſhe never ſaw 'or heard from them; ſhe could get no ſatisfac-'tory anſwer, but was put off with being told 'they were not in England;—and that ſhe ſhould 'know when ſhe grew older.

'This perſon had bred her up with the utmoſt 'tenderneſs, and employed the moſt aſſiduous care 'in her education; which was the principal ob-'ject of her attention. They had lived in a 'neat cottage in the moſt retired part of Surry 'from Miſs Mancel's earlieſt remembrance, till 'her aunt, after having been ſome time in a 'bad ſtate of health, fell into a galloping 'conſumption. As ſoon as ſhe apprehended 'the danger with which her life was threatned, 'ſhe prepared every thing for her removal to Lon-'don; but as ſhe did not expect ever to return, 'this took more time than the quickneſs of her 'decay could well allow. The haſty approach of 'her diſſolution affected her extremely on the ac-'count of her little neice, and ſhe often expreſſed 'her concern in terms intelligible to her who was 'the occaſion of it, who gathered from the ex-'preſſions which fell from her aunt, that the

'motive for the journey was to find out ſome 'of Miſs Mancel's relations, to whom ſhe 'might deliver her before death had put a pe-'riod to her own life;—and where ſhe might 'ſafely remain till the return of her parents into 'England.

'In this reſolution ſhe diſcharged the only 'ſervant ſhe kept, delivered up her houſe to her 'landlord, and, after having ſettled all her pecu-'niary affairs, ſhe ſet out on her journey with 'her little charge; but grew ſo ill on the road, 'that ſhe deſired to be ſet down at the firſt 'inn; and her illneſs encreaſed ſo faſt ſhe 'had no thought of removing; nor was ſhe 'able to make any very exact enquiries after 'the perſons of whom ſhe came in ſearch.'

This account was interrupted with many tears, which ſerved to render it more affecting, and Mr. Hintman—as much touched as the good old man, who was the occaſion of his having heard it,—agreed with him, that it would be proper to examine into the effects of which the deceaſed was then poſſeſſed; and to ſee if they could find any paper which would in a degree clear up the myſterious part of this affair.

This was accordingly performed; but as to the latter intention without any ſucceſs; for after all the examination they could make, they remained as much in the dark as ever.

They found in her trunk rather more money than was requiſite to bury her in a manner becoming her rank; to defray the expences of her ſickneſs; and to reward thoſe that had attended her.

The old man expreſſed a willingneſs to take the child;—he ſaid, 'it was a legacy left him by one 'who had conceived ſome confidence in his hu-'manity,

'manity, and he could not in conſcience diſappoint an opinion which did him honour; though, having children of his own, he did not pretend to breed her up in the genteel manner to which ſhe ſeemed by birth entitled.'

Mr. Hintman replied, that, 'he ſhould have great reaſon to reproach himſelf, if with the ample fortune he enjoyed, and having no children, or family to partake of it, he ſhould ſuffer another to take that charge, to whom it could not be ſo convenient; he therefore would immediately receive her as his child; and ſee her educated in all accompliſhments proper for a young perſon of faſhion and fortune; as he ſhould be able to ſupply all deficiency, if neceſſary, in the latter particular.'

The old man was very glad to have the child better eſtabliſhed than with him; though he had for ſome hours looked with ſo much pleaſure on her as his adopted daughter, that no conſideration, but the proſpect of her greater advantage, could have reconciled him to parting with her.

In purſuance of the reſolution Mr. Hintman had taken, he carried Miſs Mancel to a French boarding ſchool, which he had heard commended; very prudently judging, that his houſe was not a proper place for education, having there no one fit to take care of a young perſon.

Louiſa was ſo oppreſſed by the forlornneſs of her ſituation, that ſhe felt none of that reluctance to going amongſt ſtrangers, ſo uſual with children of her age. All the world was equally unknown to her, therefore ſhe was indifferent where ſhe was carried, only ſhe rather wiſhed not to have been taken from the good old man, whoſe venerable aſpect, and compaſſionate behaviour,

viour, had in ſome degree attached her to him; —but ſhe felt the generoſity of Mr. Hintman's declared intentions; and, young as ſhe was, had too much delicacy to appear ungrateful, by ſhewing an unwillingneſs to accompany him. Mademoiſelle d'Avaux, the miſtreſs of the ſchool, was pleaſed with the appearance of her young ſcholar, whoſe tears had ceaſed for ſome time; and her face bore no diſfiguring ſigns of ſorrow; the dejection which overſpread it, giving charms equal to thoſe of which it robbed it.

Mr. Hintman deſired Mademoiſelle d'Avaux to take the trouble of providing Miſs Mancel with all things requiſite, and to put her in proper mourning; thoſe minute feminine details being things of which he was too ignorant to acquit himſelf well; and gave ſtrict charge that her mind ſhould be cultivated with the greateſt care, and no accompliſhment omitted which ſhe was capable of acquiring.

What contributed much towards gratifying this wiſh of Mr. Hintman's, was Mademoiſelle d'Avaux's houſe being ſo full, that there was no room for Louiſa, but a ſhare of the apartment which Miſs Melvyn had hitherto enjoyed alone, and of which ſhe could not willingly have admitted any one to partake but the lovely child who was preſented to her for this purpoſe. Her beautiful form prejudiced every one in her favour; but the diſtreſs and ſorrow which were impreſſed on her countenance, at an age generally too volatile and thoughtleſs to be deeply affected, could not fail of exciting a tender ſenſibility in the heart of a perſon of Miſs Melvyn's diſpoſition.

This young lady was of a very peculiar turn of Mind. She had been the darling daughter of

Sir

Sir Charles and Lady Melvyn, whoſe attachment to her had appeared equal; but, in the former, it was rather the reſult of habit, and compliance with Lady Melvyn's behaviour, than a deep-rooted affection, of which his heart was not very ſuſceptible; while Lady Melvyn's aroſe from that entire fondneſs which maternal love, and the moſt diſtinguiſhing reaſon could excite in the warmeſt and tendereſt of hearts.

Sir Charles was an eaſy tempered weak man, who gave no proof of good ſenſe, but the ſecret deference he had to his wife's judgment, whoſe very ſuperior underſtanding was on nothing ſo aſſiduouſly employed, as in giving conſequence to the man with whom ſhe was united, by the deſire of her parents, contrary to her inclination. Their authority had been neceſſary to reduce her to compliance, not from any particular diſlike to Sir Charles, who had deſervedly the reputation of ſobriety, and great good-nature, and whoſe perſon was remarkably fine; but Lady Melvyn perceived the weakneſs of his underſtanding, and ignorant of the ſtrength of her own, was unwilling to enter into life without a guide, whoſe judgment was equal to the deſire he might naturally be ſuppoſed to have to direct her right, through all the various paths in which ſhe might be obliged to walk; an aſſiſtance ſhe had always expected from an huſband; and thought, even a neceſſary part of that character. She was beſides ſenſible of the difficulty of performing a promiſe ſo ſolemnly made, as that of honour and obedience to one who, though ſhe knew not half her own excellence, ſhe muſt be ſenſible was her inferior.

Theſe reaſons had deterred Lady Melvyn from marrying Sir Charles, but when ſhe could no longer avoid it without violating her duty to her parents,

rents, ſhe reſolved to ſupply the apparent deficiencies in her huſband's underſtanding, by a moſt reſpectful deference to his opinions, thus conferring diſtinction on him, whom ſhe wiſhed every one to eſteem and honour; for as there was no affectation in this part of her conduct, any more than in the reſt of her behaviour, all were convinced, that the man who was reſpected by a woman of an underſtanding ſo ſuperior to moſt of her own ſex, and the greateſt part of the other, muſt have great merit, though they could not perceive wherein it conſiſted.

In company Lady Melvyn always endeavoured to turn the converſation on ſuch ſubjects as ſhe knew were beſt ſuited to Sir Charles's capacity, more deſirous that he ſhould appear to advantage, than to diſplay her own talents. She contrived to make all her actions appear the reſult of his choice, and whatever he did by her inſtigation, ſeemed even to himſelf to have been his own thought. As their way of life was in every circumſtance conſonant to reaſon, religion, and every virtue which could render them uſeful and reſpectable to others, Sir Charles acquired a character in the neighbourhood, which Lady Melvyn thought a ſufficient reward for the endeavours ſhe uſed to ſecure it to him;—and, for that purpoſe, fixed her abode entirely in the country, where his conduct might give him the reſpect, which would not be ſo eaſily obtained in a gayer ſcene, where talents are in higher eſtimation than virtue.

Sir Charles and Lady Melvyn had no other child than the daughter I have mentioned, whoſe education was her mother's great care; and ſhe had the pleaſure of ſeeing in her an uncommon capacity, with every virtue the fondeſt parent could wiſh;

wiſh; and which indeed ſhe had by inheritance; but her mother's humility, made them appear to her, as a peculiar gift of providence to her daughter.

Lady Melvyn ſoon began to inſtil all the principles of true religion into her daughter's infant mind; and, by her judicious inſtructions, gave her knowledge far ſuperior to her years; which was indeed the moſt delightful taſk of this fond parent; for her daughter's uncommon docility and quick parts, continually ſtimulated by her tenderneſs for the beſt of mother's, made her improve even beyond Lady Melvyn's expectation.

In this happy ſituation Miſs Melvyn continued till near the end of her fourteenth year, when ſhe had the misfortune to loſe this excellent parent, nor was ſhe the only ſufferer by Lady Melvyn's death; every poor perſon within her knowledge loſt a benefactreſs;—all who knew her, an excellent example;—and, ſome, the beſt of friends; but her extraordinary merit was but imperfectly known till after her deceaſe; for ſhe had made Sir Charles appear ſo much the principal perſon, and director of all their affairs; that till the change in his conduct proved how great her influence had been, ſhe had only ſhared the approbation, which, afterwards, became all her own.

Human nature cannot feel a deeper affliction than now overwhelmed Miſs Melvyn; wherein Sir Charles bore as great a ſhare, as the eaſineſs of his nature was capable of;—but his heart was not ſuſceptible, either of ſtrong, or laſting impreſſions. He walked in the path Lady Melvyn had traced out for him; and ſuffered his daughter to imitate her mother in benevolent duties; and

ſhe

ſhe had profitted too much by the excellent pattern, whereby ſhe had endeavoured to regulate her actions, not to acquit herſelf far beyond what could have been expected at her years.

Miſs Melvyn was not long indulged in the only conſolation her grief could receive,—that of being permitted to aim at an imitation of her mother,—for Sir Charles had not been a widower quite a year, when he married a young lady in the neighbourhood, who had deſigned him this honour from the hour of Lady Melvyn's death; and to procure better opportunity for affecting her purpoſe, had pretended a moſt affectionate compaſſion for Miſs Melvyn's deep affliction; ſhe viſited her continually; and appeared ſo tenderly attached to her, that Miſs Melvyn,—who had neither experience, nor any guile in her own heart to inſpire her with ſuſpicions of an attempt to deceive her, made that return of affection which ſhe thought gratitude required; nor was ſhe at all diſturbed when ſhe found ſhe was ſoon to look on this lady in another light, than that in which ſhe had hitherto ſeen her; it was eaſy for her to reſpect one whom ſhe before loved; and ſhe had been taught ſo true a veneration for her father, that ſhe felt no averſeneſs to obey whomſoever he thought proper to give a title to her duty.

Miſs Melvyn had but very little time to congratulate herſelf on having acquired for a mother, a friend in whoſe converſation ſhe hoped to enjoy great ſatisfaction, and to feel the tenderneſs of an intimate changed into the fondneſs of a parent. She behaved to her with the ſame perfect reſpect, and all the humility of obedience, as if nature had placed her in that parental relation; fearing, if ſhe gave way to the familiarity which had ſubſiſted between them when they were on an equality,

lity, it might appear like a failure in the reverence due to her new ſituation.

But this behaviour, amiable as it was, could not make the now Lady Melvyn change the plan ſhe had formed for her future conduct. She had not been married above a month, before ſhe began to intimate to Sir Charles, 'that Miſs Melvyn's education had been very imperfect;—that a young lady of her rank ought to be highly accompliſhed; but that after ſhe had been ſo long indulged by her parents, if a mother-in-law were to pretend to direct her, it might not only exaſperate Miſs Melvyn, but prejudice the world againſt herſelf; as people are too apt to determine againſt perſons in that relation, without examining the merits of the cauſe; and though, ſhe ſaid, ſhe was little concerned about the opinion of the world, in compariſon with her tender regard for any one that belonged to him; yet ſhe was much influenced by the other reaſon ſhe had alledged, for not appearing to dictate to Miſs Melvyn, being very deſirous of keeping on affectionate terms with her; and ſhe was already much mortified, at perceiving that young lady had imbibed too many of the vulgar prejudices againſt a mother-in-law; though, for her part, ſhe had endeavoured to behave with ſubmiſſion to her daughter, inſtead of pretending to aſſume any authority.' The conſequence and concluſion of all theſe inſinuations was, that 'it would be adviſeable to ſend Miſs Melvyn to a boarding ſchool.'

Sir Charles was ſoon prevailed with to comply with his lady's requeſt; and his daughter was acquainted with the determination; which Lady Melvyn aſſured her, 'was very contrary to her inclination, who ſhould find a great loſs of ſo agreeable a friend, but that Sir Charles had declared his intention

'tention in ſo peremptory a manner, that ſhe 'dared not contend.'

Miſs Melvyn had before obſerved, that marriage had made a great alteration in Lady Melvyn's behaviour; but this was a ſtroke ſhe did not expect, and a very mortifying one to her, who had long laid aſide all childiſh amuſements; had been taught to employ herſelf as rationally as if ſhe had arrived at a maturer age, and been indulged in the exerciſe of a moſt benevolent diſpoſition, having given ſuch good proofs of the propriety with which ſhe employed both her time and money, that ſhe had been diſpenſed from all reſtraints; and now to commence a new infancy, and be confined to the ſociety of children, was a very afflicting change; but it came from a hand ſhe too much reſpected to make any reſiſtance, though ſhe eaſily perceived that it was entirely at her mother's inſtigation; and knew her father too well, to believe he could be peremptory on any occaſion.

A very ſhort time intervened between the declaration and execution of this deſign, and Miſs Melvyn was introduced to mademoiſelle d'Avaux by her kind mother-in-law, who with ſome tears, and many aſſurances of regret, left her there. Miſs Melvyn had been at this ſchool three months when Louiſa Mancel was brought thither, and though a ſeparation from a father ſhe ſincerely loved, and the fear of the arts Lady Melvyn might uſe to alienate his affections from her, after having thus removed her from his preſence, greatly affected her ſpirits, and ſhe found no companions fit to amuſe her rational mind, yet ſhe endeavoured to ſupport her mortifications with all the chearfulneſs ſhe could aſſume; and received ſome ſatisfaction from the converſation of Mademoiſelle d'Avaux, a woman

woman of tolerable underſtanding, and who was much pleaſed with Miſs Melvyn's behaviour.

Miſs Mancel's dejected air prejudiced Miſs Melvyn much in her favour; the uſual conſequence of a ſimilitude of mind or manners; and when by a farther knowledge of her, ſhe perceived her uncommon ſhare of underſtanding; her deſire to learn; the ſtrength of her application; the quickneſs of her apprehenſion; and her great ſweetneſs of temper, ſhe grew extremely fond of her; and as Miſs Mancel's melancholy rendered her little inclined to play with thoſe of her own age, ſhe was almoſt always with Miſs Melvyn, who found great pleaſure in endeavouring to inſtruct her; and grew to feel for her the tenderneſs of a mother, while Miſs Mancel began to receive conſolation from experiencing an affection quite maternal.

At the beginning of the winter, Lady Melvyn, who had leſs ambition to imitate the real merit of her predeceſſor, than to exhibit her own imaginary perfections, brought Sir Charles to London, there to fix their reſidence for the enſuing half year. This made little alteration in Miſs Melvyn's way of life. Sir Charles and his lady would ſometimes call upon her, the latter not choſing to truſt Sir Charles alone with his daughter, leſt ſhe ſhould repreſent to him, how unworthily ſhe was treated; but as he was not devoid of affection for her, he would ſometimes viſit her privately; concealing it from his lady, who endeavoured to prevent this, by telling him, that 'ſchool-miſtreſſes were apt to 'take amiſs a parent's viſiting his children too often, conſtruing it as a diſtruſt of their care; and 'therefore if he offended in that way, Mademoiſelle 'd'Avaux's diſguſt might affect her behaviour to 'Miſs Melvyn, and render her reſidence there very diſagreeable, which Lady Melvyn's *great tender-*

'*neſs*

'*neſs* made her ardently wiſh to avoid, as ſhe was 'deſirous every thing ſhould be agreeable to her 'dear daughter.' Sir Charles could not be entirely reſtrained by theſe *kind* admonitions, from indulging himſelf with the ſight of Miſs Melvyn.

His lady had little reaſon to be afraid of theſe interviews, for her daughter-in-law had too ſtrong a ſenſe of filial obedience, and too delicate a regard for her father's happineſs, to ſuffer the leaſt intimation of a fault in his wife to eſcape her lips, as a good opinion of her was ſo neceſſary to his eaſe; but as ſhe ſoon found out theſe viſits were made by ſtealth, they gave her great pleaſure, as a plain proof of his affection. Lady Melvyn thought her daughter's coming abroad would be as *hurtful* as her being viſited at home, and therefore very ſeldom ſent for her to her houſe; and when ſhe did, took care to have her carried home before the hour that ſhe expected company, on pretence of preſerving the regularity of hours, which ſhe knew would be agreeable to Mademoiſelle d'Avaux.

The true reaſon of this great caution, was an unwillingneſs to be ſeen with one whoſe perſon, all her vanity could not prevent her from being ſenſible, was more attractive than her own. Miſs Melvyn was very pretty, had an engaging ſweetneſs in her countenance, and all the bloom which belongs to youth, though it does not always accompany it. Her perſon was elegant, and perfectly genteel.

Lady Melvyn was void of delicacy; ſhe had a regular ſet of features, but they wanted to be ſoftened into effeminacy, before they could have any juſt pretence to beauty. Her eyes were black, and not void of vivacity, but they neither expreſſed penetration nor gentleneſs. Her perſon was well proportioned,

proportioned, but ſhe was formed on too large a ſcale, and deſtitute of grace. She was not ill bred, but had none of that ſoftneſs of manners which gives riſe to all the ſweet civilities of life. In ſhort, Lady Melvyn was one, who, by herſelf, and many others, would be eſteemed a fine woman, and by many more, ranked only under the denomination of a ſhewey woman; like Mr. Bayes's hero, ſhe was unamiable, but ſhe was great; ſhe excited the admiration of ſome, but pleaſed none.

As ſoon as ſhe appeared in the world as Lady Melvyn, ſhe began to exerciſe what ſhe thought only lively coquetry; but her entire want of grace and delicacy, often made that appear like boldneſs, which ſhe deſigned for vivacity. As her ambition to charm was as great as if ſhe had been better qualified for ſucceſs, it is not ſtrange, that ſhe did not chooſe to give opportunities of compariſon between herſelf and a daughter, who, though not ſo ſtriking at firſt ſight, was filled with attractions.

The contempt which her ladyſhip thought ſhe muſt in juſtice to her own underſtanding ſhew for her huſband's, and the ſupercilious coldneſs with which ſhe treated Miſs Melvyn, made that young lady very glad that ſhe was ſo ſeldom ſent for to her father's houſe. But ſhe wiſhed to learn ſuch accompliſhments, as whilſt ſhe lived in the country were out of her power, and therefore intimated to lady Melvyn her deſire of being taught muſic and drawing, with the better hope of ſucceſs, as the neceſſity of compleating her education had been made the excuſe for ſending her to a boarding ſchool; but this requeſt was denied her on frivolous pretences, the real cauſe, when ſhe perceived the very extravagant turn of her mother-in-law, ſhe ſoon underſtood was to avoid expence.

She had flattered herſelf ſhe might obtain permiſſion to have her books ſent to her; but upon enquiry, found that Lady Melvyn had removed them to her dreſſing-room, and intermixed them with china, in ſo ornamental a manner, ſo truly expreſſive of the turn of her mind, where a pretended love of reading was blended with a real fondneſs for trifles, that ſhe had no chance for this indulgence.

While Miſs Melvyn was ſuffering all theſe mortifications from a parent, Miſs Mancel was receiving every proof of the moſt tender affection from one bound to her by no paternal ties. Mr. Hintman, as ſoon as the ſeaſon of the year brought him to town, viſited his little charge, and was charmed with the vivacity which was now reſtored to her. He called upon her frequently, and ſeldom without ſome preſent, or a propoſal of ſome pleaſure. He would continually entreat her to make him ſome requeſt, that he might have the pleaſure of gratifying her. He frequently gave Mademoiſelle d'Avaux tickets for the play and the opera, that the young Louiſa might have ſomebody to accompany her; but as Miſs Melvyn did not think it proper at her age to go often with only her ſchool-miſtreſs, or, according to the language of ſchools, her governeſs, Miſs Mancel frequently declined being of the party, rather than leave her amiable friend and inſtructor.

There was no one who ſhewed any particular civility to Miſs Mancel, but received ſome return from Mr. Hintman. Miſs Melvyn was very deſervedly the chief object of his gratitude; but as ſhe declined accepting the preſents he offered her, he choſe a way more agreeable to himſelf, as it would make his little Louiſa the rewarder of the favours ſhe received. He therefore was laviſh of his

his money to her, and entreated her to lay it out in ſuch manner, as would be moſt agreeable to herſelf and Miſs Melvyn; at the ſame time aſking her, 'by what means ſhe could moſt gratify that young 'lady?'

Miſs Mancel ſaid, 'ſhe knew nothing that 'would be ſo acceptable to Miſs Melvyn as books.' To this Mr. Hintman replied, 'Since that was 'the caſe, he could very eaſily accommodate them, 'for he had by him a very pretty library left him 'by his ſiſter about a year before, which he had 'never unpacked, having moſt of the ſame books 'in his own ſtudy.'

This accordingly he ſent to Miſs Mancel, with proper book-caſes to contain them, which they immediately put up in their apartments. This was the moſt agreeable acquiſition imaginable; for Miſs Hintman having been a very ſenſible young lady, the collection was extremely valuable.

Mr. Hintman's great indulgence could not fail of receiving from Miſs Mancel the wiſh'd for return of affection and gratitude; whenever he came ſhe flew to him with delight, careſſed him with all the fondneſs ſo enchanting at that age, and parted from him with the extremeſt reluctance. Her great obligations to him were the frequent ſubjects of her diſcourſe with Miſs Melvyn, who had the higheſt admiration of his generoſity.

His allowance to Miſs Mancel was ſufficient to have defrayed all her expences, but thoſe were to be the care of Mademoiſelle d'Avaux, for the money he gave Louiſa was for no other purpoſe than her gratifications; neceſſity, or even uſefulneſs was out of the queſtion; every thing of that kind being provided for her. Nor was he more ſparing in what concerned her education, ſhe learnt dancing, muſic, and drawing; beſides other things generally

taught at ſchools; but her greateſt improvement was from reading with Miſs Melvyn, who inſtructed her in geography, and in ſuch parts of philoſophy of which her age was capable; but above all, ſhe was moſt attentive to inculcate into her mind the principles of true religion.

Thus her underſtanding opened in a ſurprizing degree, and while the beauty and graces of her perſon, and her great progreſs in genteel accompliſhments, charmed every eye, the nice diſcernment, and uncommon ſtrength of reaſon which appeared in her converſation, aſtoniſhed every judicious obſerver; but her moſt admirable qualities were her humility and modeſty; which, notwithſtanding her great internal and external excellencies, rendered her diffident, mild, baſhful, and tractable; her heart ſeemed as free from defects, as her underſtanding was from the follies, which in a degree are incident to almoſt every other perſon.

Miſs Melvyn and her little companion received a conſiderable encreaſe of happineſs from the preſent of books Mr. Hintman had made them; the latter had no wiſh, but that Miſs Melvyn might receive equal indulgence from parents, that ſhe enjoyed from one who bore no relation to her. The firſt deſire that occurred to her on Mr. Hintman's profuſe preſents of money, was to treat her friend with maſters for muſic and drawing, and ſuch other things as ſhe knew ſhe had an inclination to learn; but as ſhe was not unacquainted with her delicacy on that ſubject, as ſoon as Mr. Hintman left her, ſhe ran to Miſs Melvyn with ſome of the impatience in her countenance, though ſhe endeavoured to conceal it, with which her heart was filled, and tried every tender careſs, every fond and humble petition, to obtain a promiſe from that young lady, that ſhe would grant her a requeſt ſhe had to make.

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She hung round her neck, and endeavoured to prevail by a thouſand engaging infantine arts; and when ſhe found they would not ſucceed, ſhe knelt down before her, and with all the grace and importunity of the moſt amiable ſuppliant, tried to win her to compliance. Nothing would avail, for Miſs Melvyn was convinced by her earneſtneſs, that her deſign was to confer ſome favour; ſhe knew the generoſity of her youthful mind too well to believe ſhe ſo ardently aimed at any thing that was for her own private gratification.

Thus Louiſa found herſelf reduced to explain the uſe ſhe intended to have made of the promiſe ſhe wanted to obtain; and having acquainted Miſs Melvyn with Mr. Hintman's generous allowance, and of the payment ſhe had received of the firſt quarter, ſhe in explicit terms told her, 'Mr. Hintman has indeed given me money, but it depends 'on you to make that money yield me pleaſure, by 'ſuffering me to apply it to ſuch uſes, as will procure me the inexpreſſible joy of contributing in 'ſome degree to the pleaſure of one who renders 'my life ſo very happy.'

Miſs Melvyn was ſo pleaſed with the generoſity of her little pupil, that ſhe gave her as many careſſes as the other had laviſhed on her, in order to obtain the promiſe ſhe ſo much wiſhed for; but ſhe could not be induced to grant her requeſt. Miſs Melvyn was void of that pride which often conceals itſelf under the name of ſpirit and greatneſs of ſoul; and makes people averſe to receiving an obligation, becauſe they feel themſelves too proud to be grateful, and think that to be obliged, implies an inferiority which their pride cannot ſupport. Had Louiſa been of the ſame age with herſelf, ſhe would have felt a kind of property in all ſhe poſſeſſed; friendſhip, the tenure by which ſhe

held it; for where hearts are ſtrictly united, ſhe had no notion of any diſtinction in things of leſs importance, the adventitious goods of fortune. The boundaries and barriers raiſed by thoſe two watchful and ſuſpicious enemies, Meum and Tuum, were in her opinion broke down by true friendſhip; and all property laid in one undiſtinguiſhed common; but to accept Miſs Mancel's money, eſpecially in ſo great a proportion, appeared to her like taking advantage of her youth; and as ſhe did not think her old enough to be a ſufficient judge of the value of it, ſhe did not look upon her as capable of being a party in ſo perfect a friendſhip, as was requiſite to conſtitute that unity of property.

Poor Louiſa by this diſappointment of the firſt wiſh of her heart, found what older people often experience, that her riches inſtead of pleaſure procured her only mortification. She could ſcarcely refrain from tears at a refuſal which ſhe thought muſt ariſe from want of affection, and told Miſs Melvyn, ſhe ſaw that ſhe loved her but imperfectly; for, added ſhe, 'Could we change places, with how much 'pleaſure ſhould I have accepted it from you! and 'the ſatisfaction that learning theſe things now 'give me would be turned into delight, by reflecting on the gratification you would receive in having been the means of procuring them for me. 'I ſhould not envy you the joy of giving, becauſe 'I as receiver ſhould not have the leſs ſhare of that 'ſatisfaction, ſince by reflecting on yours I muſt partake of it, and ſo encreaſe my own.'

Miſs Melvyn could not forbear bluſhing at finding a ſuperior degree of delicacy, and a generoſity much more exalted, in one ſo young, than ſhe had felt in herſelf. She plainly ſaw, that the greateſt proof of a noble mind is to feel a joy in gratitude; for thoſe who know all the pleaſures of conferring

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an obligation, will be ſenſible, that by accepting it they give the higheſt delight the human mind can feel, when employed on human objects; and therefore while they receive a benefit, they will taſte not only the comforts ariſing from it to themſelves, but ſhare the gratification of a benefactor, from reflecting on the joy they give to thoſe who have conferred it: thus the receiver of a favour from a truly generous perſon, 'by owing owes not, and is at once 'indebted and diſcharged.'

As Miſs Melvyn felt her little friend's reproach, and ſaw that ſhe had done her injuſtice in thinking her youth rendered her incapable of that perfection of friendſhip, which might juſtify the accepting of her offer; ſhe acknowledged her error, and aſſured her, 'ſhe would comply if ſhe had no other means 'of obtaining the inſtruction ſhe propoſed to pur-'chaſe for her; but that was not the caſe, for ſhe 'found ſhe could very well learn from ſeeing the 'maſters teach her, and practiſing in their ab-'ſence.'

Mr. Hintman expreſſed a deſire that Miſs Mancel ſhould learn Italian, if ſhe had no objection to it; for he never dictated to her, but offered any advice he had to give, or any inclination which he choſe to intimate, with the humility of a dependant, rather than the authority of a benefactor; and indeed it was ſufficient; for the ſlighteſt hint that any thing would be agreeable to him, met with the moſt impatient deſire in Miſs Mancel to perform it: actuated by ſincere affection, and the ſtrongeſt gratitude, nothing made her ſo happy, as an opportunity to ſhew him the readineſs of her obedience.

But as they were at a loſs for a maſter to teach her that language, Miſs Melvyn told them ſhe knew an Italian gentleman, who had been at Sir Charles's

houſe near two months before ſhe had the misfortune of loſing the beſt of mothers. Lady Melvyn had begun to teach her daughter Italian, but deſirous that ſhe ſhould ſpeak it with great propriety, ſhe invited this gentleman to her houſe, who was reduced to great diſtreſs of circumſtances, and whoſe perſon, as well as his many virtues, ſhe had known from her childhood. He had been a friend of her father's, and ſhe was glad of this excuſe for making him an handſome preſent, which otherwiſe it was not eaſy to induce him to accept.

Mr. Hintman was not long before he procured this Italian maſter for Miſs Mancel; nor did ſhe delay making uſe of his inſtructions; but I ſhall not deſcribe her progreſs in the acquiſitions of this, any more than her other accompliſhments, in all which ſhe excelled to a ſurprizing degree; nor did Miſs Melvyn fall very ſhort of her, though ſhe was at ſuch diſadvantage in her method of learning many of them, not having the aſſiſtance of a maſter. Their time was ſo entirely engroſſed by theſe employments, that they had little leiſure, and ſtill leſs deſire to keep company with the reſt of the ſchool; but they ſaved themſelves from the diſlike which might naturally have ariſen in the minds of the other ſcholars, from being thus neglected, by little preſents which Miſs Mancel frequently made them.

Theſe two young ladies were very early riſers, and the time which was not taken up by Miſs Mancel's maſters, and that wherein it was requiſite to practiſe what they taught her, they employed in reading, wherein Mr. d'Avora, their Italian maſter, often accompanied them.

Mr. d'Avora was a man of excellent underſtanding, and had an incomparable heart. Misfortunes had ſoftened common humanity into a moſt tender diſpoſition;

diſpoſition; and had given him a thorough knowlege of mankind, without leſſening his benevolence for individuals; though ſuch as learn it by adverſity, the ſureſt ſchool for that ſcience, ſeldom ſee them in an amiable light.

Mr. d'Avora was not leſs acquainted with particular nations than with mankind in general; he had travelled through all the countries in Europe, ſome parts of Aſia and Africa, and having traverſed them with diſcernment, and the curioſity of wiſdom, not of impertinence, he received ſuch improvement of underſtanding, as few travellers can boaſt.

He had an affection for Miſs Melvyn, both for her own merits and the obligations he had to her family, and a very ſhort acquaintance with Miſs Mancel made him extremely fond of her. He took great pleaſure in aſſiſting them in the improvement they ſo induſtriouſly laboured for, and as he was a man of univerſal knowlege, he was capable of being very uſeful to them in that reſpect. For this purpoſe he often read with them, and by explaining many books on abſtruſe ſubjects, rendered ſeveral authors intelligible to them, who, without his aſſiſtance, would have been too obſcure for perſons of their age. He had very few ſcholars, therefore had much leiſure, and with great ſatisfaction dedicated part of it to our young ladies, as he ſaw he thereby gave them a very ſincere pleaſure; and he was much gratified with thinking that by his care, and inſtruction of Miſs Melvyn, he made ſome return for the friendſhip he had received from her family; and that could her mother be ſenſible of his attendance on her much-loved and now neglected daughter, it would be highly agreeable to her.

In the manner I have mentioned, theſe two young ladies paſt their time, till Miſs Mancel reached her fifteenth year, with little alteration, except the encreaſe of her charms, and her great improvement in every accompliſhment. Her appearance began to grow womanly, ſhe was indeed,

'In the bloom of beauty's pride,'

Dazzlingly handſome at firſt view; but ſuch numerous and various charms appeared on a more intimate acquaintance, that people forgot how much they had been ſtruck by the firſt ſight of her, loſt in wonder at her encreaſing attractions, to the force of which ſhe was the only perſon that was inſenſible. Humble piety rendered her indifferent to circumſtances, which ſhe looked upon rather as ſnares than bleſſings, and like a perſon on the brink of a precipice could not enjoy the beauty of the proſpect, over-awed by the dangers of her ſituation.

She had indeed too much of human nature in her not to feel ſometimes a *little* fluſh of vanity on ſeeing herſelf admired; but ſhe immediately corrected the foible, by reflecting, that whatever advantages of mind or form had fallen to her ſhare, they were given her by one who expected ſhe ſhould not ſuffer her thoughts or attention to be withdrawn thereby from him, who was the perfection of all excellence, while ſhe at beſt could but flatter herſelf with being leſs imperfect than many of her fellow creatures.

She conſidered flattery and admiration as the rocks on which young people, who are at all ſuperior to the multitude, are apt to be wrecked; deprived of quiet happineſs in this world, and exalted felicity in the next; and as ſhe was really convinced, that ſhe had only a few obvious external advantages over

over others, ſhe oppoſed to the praiſes laviſhed on her, reflections on her imperfections, which, though not apparent to any one but herſelf, ſhe verily believed were uncommonly great, as ſhe beheld them with very ſcrutinizing and rigid eyes, while ſhe looked on thoſe of others with the greateſt lenity. But of all the means ſhe uſed to preſerve her humility, ſhe was the moſt aſſiduous in praying to him who made her heart, to preſerve it humble.

Though the degree of piety I mention, may ſound in the ears of many too grave for ſo young a perſon, yet it by no means rendered her ſo; ſhe had great vivacity; a lively imagination; an uncommon ſhare of wit; and a very happy manner of expreſſing herſelf. She had all the amiable gaiety of youth, without the leaſt tendency to imprudence; and when ſhe talked moſt, and, in appearance, let fancy aſſume the reins, ſaid nothing to repent of. Her heart was all purity, univerſal benevolence and good-nature; and as out of its abundance her mouth ſpake, ſhe was in little danger of offending with her tongue.

It is not ſtrange that Mr. Hintman's fondneſs ſhould increaſe with Miſs Mancel's excellencies, but the careſſes which ſuited her earlier years were now become improper; and Mr. Hintman, by appearing inſenſible of the neceſſary change of behaviour, reduced her to great difficulties; ſhe could not reconcile herſelf to receiving of them; and yet to inform him of the impropriety, implied a forward conſciouſneſs which ſhe was not able to aſſume.

She communicated the vexation of her mind to Miſs Melvyn, who was ſtill more alarmed, as her ſuperior age and experience rendered her more apprehenſive; but ſhe knew not what to adviſe.

In this dilemma Miſs Melvyn had recourſe to their good friend, whoſe knowledge of mankind, his integrity and prudence, rendered him the ſafeſt guide. Accordingly one day when Louiſa was called from them to Mr. Hintman, who came to make her a viſit, Miſs Melvyn inform'd Mr. d'Avora, of the reaſon why her friend obeyed the ſummons with leſs joy, than he had obſerved in her on the like occaſion the year before.

Mr. d'Avora was much diſturbed at this information; but not chuſing to increaſe the uneaſineſs the young ladies ſeemed to be under till he had more certain foundation for his opinion, he only intimated, that 'cuſtoms were hard to break, but he 'ſhould hope, that when Mr. Hintman reflected on 'the impropriety of behaving to a young woman 'as if ſhe was ſtill a child, he would alter it, and 'if he was not immediately ſenſible of the differ-'ence a ſmall addition of age makes, yet her be-'haviour would lead him to recollect it.'

Although Mr. d'Avora ſeemed to pay little regard to what Miſs Melvyn ſaid, yet it made great impreſſion on him, and as ſoon as he left her, he took all proper meaſures to enquire into the character, and uſual conduct of Mr. Hintman.

This ſcrutiny did not turn out at all to his ſatisfaction, every account he received was the ſame; he had not the pleaſure of finding what is uſually aſſerted, that 'all men have two characters;' for Mr. Hintman had but one, and that the moſt alarming that could be for Miſs Mancel. Every perſon told him, 'that Mr. Hintman had a very 'great fortune, which he ſpent entirely in the gra-'tification of his favourite vice, the love of wo-'men; on whom his profuſeneſs was boundleſs. 'That as he was eaſily captivated, ſo he was ſoon 'tired; and ſeldom kept a woman long after he

'had

'had obtained the free poſſeſſion of her; but ge-
'nerally was more bountiful than is cuſtomary
'with men of his debauched principles at parting
'with them.'

This, Mr. d'Avora was aſſured, was Mr. Hint-man's only vice; that he was good-natured, and generous on all occaſions. From this account he ſaw too great reaſon to fear, that all the care which had been taken to improve Miſs Mancel, aroſe only from a ſort of epicuriſm in his predominant vice, but yet this was too doubtful a circumſtance to be the ground-work of any plan of action. A man of acknowledged generoſity and good-nature, however vicious, might do a noble action without having any criminal deſign. In this uncertainty of mind he knew not what to adviſe her, and was unwilling to excite ſuch fears in the breaſts of theſe two young friends, as might be groundleſs; but yet would entirely deſtroy their peace; therefore, he only told Miſs Melvyn in general terms, that,
'Mr. Hintman's character was ſuch, as rendered it
'very neceſſary that Louiſa ſhould be much on her
'guard; but that whether more than prudent cau-
'tion, and decent reſerve were requiſite, her own
'obſervation muſt diſcover, for no one elſe could
'determine the point, ſince he had the reputation
'of being generous as well as debauched; there-
'fore his actions towards her might be, and he
'hoped were, the reſult of his greateſt virtue, rather
'than of his predominant vice.'

Miſs Melvyn made a faithful report of what Mr. d'Avora had ſaid to her, which filled both herſelf and her friend with inexpreſſible uneaſineſs.

Louiſa was in great difficulty how to act, between gratitude and affection on the one ſide, and neceſſary caution and reſerve on the other. She was

almoſt as much afraid of appearing ungrateful, as of being imprudent. She found little aſſiſtance from the advice of her friends, who declared themſelves incapable of directing her, therefore ſhe was obliged to lay aſide all dependance on her own care, and to truſt in that of heaven, convinced that her innocence would be guarded by that power who knew the integrity and purity of her heart; and that while ſhe preſerved it unblemiſhed, even in thought and inclination, her prayers for his protection would not be unavailing.

The remainder of the winter paſſed like the former part, only that the encreaſe of her apprehenſions, ſo far leſſened her eaſy vivacity, that Mr. Hintman obſerved the alteration, and complained of the conſtraint and awe which damped her converſation.

As the ſchool broke up at Eaſter, he entreated her to accompany him that ſhort time into the country, from which ſhe would gladly have excuſed herſelf, both on account of her fears, and of her unwillingneſs to leave Miſs Melvyn, of whoſe converſation ſhe was now more particularly tenacious, as lady Melvyn had determined to ſuffer her to return home in a ſhort time, not knowing how to excuſe her remaining longer at ſchool, as ſhe was entered into her one and twentieth year. Miſs Melvyn would have been glad that her ladyſhip had not ſhewn this token of regard to popular opinion; for ſince ſhe had enjoyed Miſs Mancel's company, and been in poſſeſſion of ſo good a collection of books, ſhe was grown perfectly contented with her ſituation.

Louiſa, to make Mr. Hintman deſiſt from the requeſt he urged with ſo much importunity, tried every means that did not appear like a total diſinclination to accompany him, for any thing that bore

bore the air of ingratitude could not be ſupported by her, whoſe heart was ſo void of it, and who thought ſhe could never feel enough for her benefactor, if his deſigns were not ſo criminal, as ſhe feared, but ſcarcely could ſuffer herſelf to ſuſpect.

Mr. Hintman was too ardent in his purpoſes to give up his favourite ſcheme, and Louiſa beheld with inexpreſſible concern the day approach, when ſhe muſt either accompany him into the country, or diſoblige him for ever, and make herſelf appear extremely ungrateful in the eyes of a man, whom ſhe loved and honoured like a father. Her addreſſes to heaven for protection now became more vehement and continual, and the greateſt part of her time was ſpent on her knees in praying to that power in whom ſhe truſted. Miſs Melvyn and Mr. d'Avora were ſcarcely leſs anxious, or under fewer apprehenſions than herſelf, but could ſee no reſource except in the protection of the Almighty, to whom we ſeldom apply with entire faith and reſignation while we have any hopes in human aſſiſtance.

Two days before that fixed on for the purpoſed journey, when Louiſa's anxiety was riſen to the utmoſt height, the ſchool-miſtreſs entered the room, with a countenance ſo melancholy, as was more ſuitable to the ſituation of mind in which the two young friends were then in, than to any reaſon they apprehended ſhe could have for an air of ſo much ſorrow. She ſoon began a diſcourſe, which they immediately apprehended was preparatory to the opening of ſome fatal event, and which, as is uſual in ſuch caſes, was, if poſſible, more alarming than any misfortune it could precede. The ladies expreſſed their fears, and begged to be acquainted with what had befallen them. After conſiderable efforts to deliver her of the ſecret with which

ſhe

ſhe was pregnant, they learnt that a gentleman was in the parlour, who came to inform Miſs Mancel, that Mr. Hintman died the day before in a fit of an apoplexy.

All Louiſa's fears and ſuſpicions vaniſhed at once, and grief alone took poſſeſſion of her heart. The ſhock ſo entirely overcame her, that ſhe was not able to ſee the fatal meſſenger of ſuch melancholy tidings as the death of her benefactor, and ſecond father. Miſs Melvyn was obliged to undertake this office, and learnt from the gentleman, that Mr. Hintman died without a will, and therefore left the poor Louiſa as deſtitute, except being enriched by various accompliſhments, as he found her, and at a much more dangerous time, when her beauty would ſcarcely ſuffer compaſſion to ariſe unaccompanied with ſofter ſentiments. This gentleman proceeded to inform Miſs Melvyn, that 'his father and another perſon of equal relation to Mr. Hintman, were heirs at law. He expreſſed great concern for Miſs Mancel, and wiſhed he had his father's power of repairing Mr. Hintman's neglect, but that his influence extended no farther than to obtain a commiſſion to pay the expences of another year at that ſchool, that the young lady might have time to recollect herſelf after ſo fatal a change, and determine at leiſure on her future courſe of life.'

Miſs Melvyn was ſo ſenſibly touched at the proſpect of the approaching diſtreſs with which her friend was threatened, that ſhe burſt into tears, and uttered ſome exclamations concerning 'the inconſiſtency of that affection, which could ſuffer a man to reſt a moment without ſecuring a proviſion in caſe of death, to a young woman he ſeemed to love with the greateſt exceſs of tenderneſs.' 'Believe me, madam, ſaid the young gentleman,

tleman, 'Mr. Hintman was capable of no love 'that was not entirely ſenſual, and conſequently 'ſelfiſh; all who knew him lamented the fate of a 'young woman, who by every account is ſo ſu-'periorly lovely. Among his friends he made no 'ſecret of his deſigns in all he had done for her, 'and boaſted frequently of the extraordinary charms 'which were ripening for his poſſeſſion. It was 'but two days ago, that he was exulting in the 'preſence of ſome of them, that the time was now 'approaching, when he ſhould be rewarded for 'long expectation, and boundleſs expence; for he 'ſhould then, he ſaid, be ſure of her perſon, and 'had long ſecured her heart. He knew he had 'ſtrong prejudices and ſtrange ſcruples to combat; 'but was prepared, and ſhould not find them diffi-'cult to conquer; at worſt, his ſteward in a par-'ſon's habit would lull them all to ſleep.'

'Good heaven! cried Miſs Melvyn, could there 'be ſuch a wretch, and were there men who 'would keep company with him, who would bear 'the diſgrace of being called his friends?

'Your notions, madam, replied the gentleman, 'are too refined for perſons who live in the world: 'ſhould a man inſiſt on ſtrict morals in all his ac-'quaintance, he might enjoy a ſolitude in the moſt 'populous city; though, I confeſs, nothing but 'ties of kindred could have made me intimate with 'one of Mr. Hintman's character, which I ſhould 'not thus have expoſed to you, but as I imagined 'a better knowledge of the man, might alleviate 'the affliction you ſeemed to feel for Miſs Mancel's 'having loſt one whom you eſteemed ſo ſincere a 'friend. I ſhould have been glad, continued he, 'could I have ſeen the young lady, of whom Mr. 'Hintman told ſuch wonders; but I will not pre-'ſume to preſs it, time may offer me ſome oppor-

'tunity

'tunity for ſatisfying my curoſity without paining 'her, I therefore take my leave, with only requeſt-'ing your permiſſion to remit the money of which 'I was made the bearer.'

Miſs Melvyn was ſo much affected with her friend's ſituation, that ſhe took the paper the gentleman offered her, without having power to reflect whether ſhe ought to accept it, or being able to make him any acknowledgment; and he retired directly. She was obliged to ſtay ſome time to compoſe her ſpirits before ſhe went to her friend, that ſhe might be the better able to comfort her. On examining the paper, ſhe found it a bank-note of an hundred pounds, which was now become all Miſs Mancel's fortune.

Lamont could not forbear interrupting Mrs. Maynard in this place, by ſome very ſevere reflexions on Mr. Hintman's having neglected to make a proviſion for Miſs Mancel in caſe of his death, which I believe was the part of his conduct that to Lamont appeared moſt inexcuſable; for though he is too faſhionable to think intriguing very criminal, yet he is naturally generous, as far as money is concerned. 'I cannot think, replied my couſin, that 'Mr. Hintman's behaviour in that particular can 'be much wondered at. Death to ſuch a man 'muſt be ſo dreadful an event, that he will naturally endeavour to baniſh it from his mind, whenever it attempts to intrude, and when a perſon 'takes ſo little care to make proviſion for his own 'happineſs after death, is it ſtrange he ſhould be 'unmindful of what ſhall befall another after that 'fatal period? when a man neglects his own ſoul, 'and deprives himſelf of all hope of everlaſting 'felicity, can we expect he ſhould take any trouble to provide for the temporal convenience of 'another perſon?

'Beſides,

'Beſides, could he, who aimed at reducing an 'innocent and amiable young woman to guilt and 'infamy in this world, and eternal perdition in the 'next, be under any concern leſt ſhe ſhould fall 'into the leſſer miſeries of poverty? it would 'have been an inconſiſtency in ſuch a cha-'racter.'

'You ſee gallantry in a very ſerious light, ma-'dam, ſaid Lamont.'

'I do indeed, ſir, anſwered Mrs. Maynard, I 'look on it as the moſt dangerous of vices, it de-'ſtroys truth, honour, humanity, it is directly 'contrary to the laws of God, is the deſtruction 'of ſociety, and almoſt as inconſiſtent with mo-'rality as with religion.'

'I beg pardon, madam, interrupted Lamont, '(who felt himſelf a little touched with what ſhe 'ſaid) for breaking into your narrative, and muſt 'beg you will continue it.'

Miſs Melvyn, reſumed Mrs. Maynard, was too well acquainted with the ſtrength of Louiſa's mind, to think it neceſſary to conceal from her any part of what had paſſed between herſelf and Mr. Hintman's relation.

Louiſa, much affected by Mr. Hintman's dying, with a heart ſo unfit to appear at the tribunal before which he was ſo ſuddenly ſummoned, thought not immediately of herſelf; but when ſhe reflected on the dangers ſhe had eſcaped, ſhe bleſſed her poverty, ſince it was the conſequence of an event which delivered her from ſo much greater evils, and ſent up many ſincere and ardent thankſgivings to heaven, for ſo ſignal a preſervation. Theſe thoughts poſſeſſed our young friends for the firſt three or four days after Mr. Hintman's death; but then they began to think it requiſite to conſult with Mr. d'Avora, on what courſe of life it was

moſt

moſt adviſable for Miſs Mancel to enter. This was a difficult point to determine; though her underſtanding and attainments were far ſuperior to her years, yet they were ſenſible her youth would be a great impediment to her in any undertaking. Mr. d'Avora therefore adviſed, that ſhe ſhould continue a little longer at the ſchool, and then fix in the moſt private manner imaginable for three or four years, by which time he hoped to be able to eſtabliſh her in ſome widow's family, as governeſs to her children; for he told her ſhe muſt not expect, while her perſon continued ſuch as it then was, that a married woman would receive her in any capacity that fixed her in the ſame houſe with her huſband.

As Miſs Mancel had many jewels and trinkets of value, ſhe had no doubt but that with œconomy, ſhe might ſupport herſelf for the term Mr. d'Avora mentioned, and even longer if requiſite, as ſhe could add to her little fund by the produce of her induſtry. As Miſs Melvyn's return home drew near, it was agreed, that ſhe ſhould ſeek out ſome place in Sir Charles's neighbourhood, where Louiſa might lodge cheaply and reputably; and in the mean time Mr. d'Avora ſhould diſpoſe of whatever ſhe had of value, except her books and her harpſicord; theſe ſhe reſolved not to part with till the produce of her other things, and the money ſhe had by her, was ſpent, as they would not only amuſe her in the country, but afford her the power of improving herſelf in thoſe accompliſhments which were to be her future proviſion.

This plan ſoftened the pangs of ſeparation when the time of Miſs Melvyn's departure arrived. It was not long before ſhe found out an apartment at a reputable farmers, where Miſs Mancel might lodge conveniently. Had it been a leſs tolerable place, its vicinity to Sir Charles's houſe, from which

it

it was but a quarter of a mile diſtant, would have made it a very delightful abode to her, and ſhe ſoon repaired thither.

Great was the joy of the two friends at meeting. Miſs Melvyn's ſituation at home was rendered as irkſome as poſſible, by Lady Melvyn's behaviour both to her and Sir Charles, who, notwithſtanding her ill treatment, was extremely fond of, and totally guided by her. His mind was ſo entirely enſlaved, that he beheld nothing but in the light wherein ſhe pleaſed to repreſent it, and was ſo eaſy a dupe, that ſhe could ſcarcely feel the joys of ſelf triumph in her ſuperior art, which was on no ſubject ſo conſtantly exerted, as in keeping up a coldneſs in Sir Charles towards his daughter; this ſhe had with tolerable facility effected in her abſence, and was aſſiduouſly careful to preſerve now ſhe was preſent. To thoſe who know not the power an artful woman can obtain over a weak man, it would appear incredible, that any father could be prejudiced againſt a daughter, whoſe whole attention was to pleaſe him. She had ſo perfect a command over her temper, that ſhe never appeared to take offence at any thing Lady Melvyn ſaid or did, though that lady endeavoured by every provocation to throw her off her guard. This behaviour only encreaſed her hatred, which was not in the leaſt abated by Miſs Melvyn's taking every opportunity of being ſerviceable to her brothers and ſiſters-in-law. Lady Melvyn perſuaded Sir Charles, that his daughter's calmneſs was only aſſumed in his preſence, and continually complained of her inſolence, when he was not by. If he ever appeared to doubt the truth of her report, ſhe would burſt into tears, complain of his want of love, and little confidence in her; and ſometimes thought proper to ſhew her grief at ſuch treatment, by a pretended hyſteric fit,

always

always ready at call to come to her aſſiſtance, though really ſo unneceſſarily laviſhed on one eaſily duped without thoſe laborious means, that it appeared a wantonneſs of cunning, which was thus exerted only for its own indulgence. She ſoon perceived that Miſs Melvyn rather choſe to ſubmit to any aſperſions, than to render her father unhappy, by undeceiving him; and taking advantage of this generoſity, would ſometimes, to eſtabliſh his opinion of her veracity, accuſe Miſs Melvyn to her face of offences which ſhe had never committed, and things ſhe had never ſaid.

In ſuch a ſituation the arrival of a friend, into whoſe ſympathetic boſom ſhe could pour all her griefs, and in whoſe delightful ſociety ſhe could forget them, was the higheſt bleſſing. But Lady Melvyn contrived to make her feel mortifications even in this tendereſt particular, for though ſhe was in her heart glad to have her out of the houſe, that ſhe might not be witneſs of much improper behaviour, yet ſhe would ſometimes mortify herſelf in order to teaze Miſs Melvyn, by preventing her from going to her beloved friend; and continually alledged, her ſpending ſo much time with Louiſa, as a proof of that averſion ſhe had made Sir Charles believe Miſs Melvyn had to her.

Louiſa felt deeply her friend's uneaſineſs, but when they were together they could not be unhappy. They ſeldom paſſed a day without ſeeing each other, but as Lady Melvyn had taken no notice of Louiſa, ſhe could not go to her houſe, therefore their meetings were at her lodgings, where they often read together, and at other times would apply to muſic to drive away melancholy reflexions. As Louiſa wiſhed to remain near her friend as long as poſſible, ſhe endeavoured, by taking in plain-work, to provide for ſome part of her current expences, the leſs to diminiſh

miniſh the little fund ſhe had by her. She likewiſe employed part of her time in painting, having reaſon to hope, that if ſhe could find a means of offering her pictures to ſale, ſhe might from them raiſe a very convenient ſum. While ſhe was thus contriving to enable herſelf to enjoy for many years the converſation of her friend, Lady Melvyn was as induſtriouſly laying ſchemes that, if ſucceſsful, muſt diſappoint all the young ladies hopes.

Towards the end of the autumn, Mr. Morgan, a man of fortune, who had ſpent above half a year in a fruitleſs purſuit after health, made a viſit to a gentleman in the neighbourhood. Unfortunately Miſs Melvyn's charms made a conqueſt of this gentleman, in whom age had not gained a victory over paſſion. Miſs Melvyn's humility occaſioned her being the laſt perſon who perceived the impreſſion ſhe had made on his heart, and his age would ſcarcely ſuffer her to believe her ſenſes when the ſymptoms became moſt apparent. A girl may find ſome amuſement in a young lover, though ſhe feels no diſpoſition in herſelf to return his paſſion, her vanity is flattered by his addreſſes, and a woman muſt be very little diſpoſed to be pleaſed, who receives no pleaſure from one who is continually endeavouring to oblige and amuſe her; but the moſt whimſical of the poets never fancied a grey-bearded Cupid, or repreſented Hymen with a torch in one hand, and a crutch in the other. I allow that,

'Oft the matrimonial Cupid,
'Laſh'd on by time grows tir'd and ſtupid,'

And does not always wear that blooming joyous countenance, which the painters give him; but ſhould any capricious artiſt take the ſickle out of the hand of old Time, and in its place put Hymen's torch,

torch, the picture might be thought very unnatural, yet would repreſent a proper hymeneal Cupid to attend Mr. Morgan to the altar.

Such a lover could excite no emotion in his miſtreſs's heart but diſguſt. Miſs Melvyn's principles were too delicate to ſuffer her to think ſhe had any title to ridicule a man for his partiality to her, however ill-ſuited to himſelf; but no conſideration could prevent his addreſſes from being extremely diſagreeable: however, ſhe could without any great difficulty have ſo far commanded herſelf, as to have treated him with complaiſance, till he gave her an opportunity of rejecting his courtſhip, had ſhe not been apprehenſive that this affair would give Lady Melvyn a new ſubject for perſecution. She was pretty certain, that lady would be glad to ſettle her in another county; and that her averſeneſs to ſo ill-ſuited a marriage would only ſerve as an additional recommendation to her mother. She was indeed determined in juſtice to Mr. Morgan, and compaſſion to herſelf, not to be induced by any ſollicitations to marry a man whom ſhe could not hope, that even the ſtrongeſt attachment to duty could render ſo well as indifferent to her, but ſhe dreaded the means that might be taken to oblige her to accept Mr. Morgan's propoſal.

Little did ſhe gueſs what thoſe means would be. She expected to be attacked alternately with all the violence of paſſion, the affected ſoftneſs of diſſimulation, and every art that cunning could deviſe, to force Sir Charles to concur in her perſecution. Theſe indeed were employed as ſoon as Mr. Morgan made his propoſals; but her ladyſhip had too many reſources in her fertile brain to perſevere long in a courſe ſhe found unavailing. The farmer where Miſs Mancel lodged had a ſon, who was in treaty with Lady Melvyn for a farm, which at the end of the

the year would become vacant. This perſon ſhe thought fit for her purpoſe, as Miſs Melvyn's going ſo frequently to Miſs Mancel, might give ſome colour to her invention. She therefore took care to be found by Sir Charles drowned in tears; he preſſed to know the occaſion of her grief, but ſhe reſiſted his importunity in ſuch a manner, as could not fail to encreaſe it, ſtill ſhe declared, that 'ſhe 'loved him to that exceſs ſhe could not communi-'cate a ſecret which ſhe knew muſt afflict him, 'even though the ſuppreſſion and inward preyings 'of her ſorrow ſhould prove fatal to her life.'

Sir Charles now on his knees intreated her 'to 'acquaint him with the misfortune ſhe endeavour-'ed to conceal, aſſuring her, that nothing could 'give him ſo much concern as ſeeing her in that 'condition.' She told him, 'ſhe was ſenſible, that 'as his wife it was her duty to obey him; (a duty 'newly diſcovered, or at leaſt newly performed by her 'ladyſhip) but ſhe feared ſhe had not ſtrength left 'to give it utterance.' The endeavour threw her into an hyſteric fit, which was ſucceeded by ſo many others, that Sir Charles was almoſt frantic with his fears for ſo tender a wife, who was thus reduced to the laſt agonies by her affectionate apprehenſions of giving him pain.

After rubbing her hands and feet till they were ſore, ſuffocating her with burnt feathers, and half poiſoning her with medicines, Sir Charles and her ſervants ſo far brought her to life, that after ſending her attendants out of the room, ſhe had juſt power to tell him, 'ſhe had diſcovered an intrigue 'between his daughter and Simon the young farmer,' and then immediately ſunk into another fit, which however did not laſt ſo long; for as ſhe had removed the heavy burden off her mind, ſhe ſoon began to recover.

Sir

Sir Charles was very much ſhocked at what Lady Melvyn told him, but could not doubt the reality of the fact, when he had ſeen the very violent effect it had had on his tender wife. He aſked her advice how to proceed; and it was ſoon determined that it was neceſſary, either to oblige Miſs Melvyn to marry Mr. Morgan directly, or to diſclaim her for ever, and remove the diſgrace of ſo infamous a conduct as far from themſelves as poſſible. With this reſolution ſhe was to be immediately acquainted.

Miſs Melvyn was accordingly called in, and bitterly reproached by Sir Charles; to which my Lady added frequent lamentations, that ſhe ſhould ſo far forget herſelf, and diſgrace ſo worthy a family, interſperſing with them many expreſſions of the undeſerved tenderneſs ſhe had always had for her, and her great confidence in Miſs Melvyn's prudence and virtue, ſhedding tears for her having ſo unhappily ſwerved from them.

As all this paſſed for ſome time in general terms, Miſs Melvyn was in doubt whether ſhe or her parents had loſt their ſenſes; convinced there muſt be diſtraction on one ſide or the other. As ſoon as ſhe could recover her ſurprize, ſhe begged to know what crime ſhe had committed? her aſtoniſhment was ſtill increaſed by the anſwer ſhe received, which was an accuſation of this ſtrange intrigue; and her frequent viſits to Miſs. Mancel were brought as proofs of it. The ſubmiſſive and mild temper which had hitherto moſt ſtrongly characteriſed her, vaniſhed at ſo injurious a charge, and ſhe denied the fact with that true ſpirit which innocence inſpires. She told Lady Melvyn, that 'though ſhe 'had hitherto ſilently ſubmitted to all her ill uſage, 'yet it was her duty to repel an injury like this, 'and when her reputation was ſo cruelly aſperſed, 'it would be criminal to ſuffer the vile inventors

'to

'to paſs unexpoſed. She inſiſted on being confronted with her accuſers, a privilege allowed to 'the greateſt criminals, and by the ſevereſt judges, 'therefore ſurely could not be refuſed by a father 'to a daughter, on a charge ſo highly improbable, 'and for which no lightneſs in her conduct ever 'gave the leaſt ground.'

As Mrs. Maynard was in this part of her narrative a bell rang, which informed us that dinner was ready, and we were unwillingly obliged to poſtpone the continuation of the hiſtory of the two young friends, till a more convenient opportunity.

In the afternoon before we roſe from table, four ladies came to drink tea with this admirable ſociety. No addition was neceſſary to render the converſation amuſing; but the ſtrangers ſeemed to look on the ladies of the houſe with ſuch gratitude and veneration, and were treated by them with ſo much friendly politeneſs, as gave me pleaſure. I found by the various enquiries after different perſons, that theſe viſitors likewiſe lived in a large ſociety. When they roſe up to take leave, Mrs. Trentham propoſed to walk part of the way home with them. No one objected to it, for the evening was inviting, and they had deſigned to ſpend it in the park, through which theſe Ladies were to paſs; for Lady Mary obſerved, that 'after having ſhewn us the 'beauties of the place, they ought to exhibit the 'riches of it.'

The park is cloſe to one ſide of the houſe; it is not quite three miles round; the inequality of the ground much increaſes its beauty, and the timber is remarkably fine. We could plainly perceive it had been many years in the poſſeſſion of good œconomiſts, who unprompted by neceſſity, did not think the profit that might ariſe from the ſale, a

ſufficient inducement to deprive it of ſome fine trees, which are now decaying, but ſo happily placed, that they are made more venerable, and not leſs beautiful by their declining age. This park is much ornamented by two or three fine pieces of water; one of them is a very noble canal, ſo artfully terminated by an elegant bridge, beyond which is a wood, that it there appears like a fine river vaniſhing from the eye.

Mrs. Morgan ſtopped us in one ſpot, ſaying, 'from hence, as Lady Mary obſerved, you may 'behold our riches, that building, (pointing to 'what we thought a pretty temple) which perhaps 'you imagine deſigned only for ornament or plea-'ſure, is a very large pidgeon houſe, that affords a 'ſufficient ſupply to our family, and many of our 'neighbours. That hill on your right-hand is a 'warren, prodigiouſly ſtocked with rabbits; this 'canal, and theſe other pieces of water, as well 'as the river you ſaw this morning, furniſh our 'table with a great profuſion of fiſh. You will 'eaſily believe from the great number of deer you 'ſee around us, that we have as much veniſon as 'we can uſe, either in preſents to our friends, or 'our own family. Hares, and all ſorts of game 'likewiſe abound here; ſo that with the help of a 'good dairy, perhaps no ſituation ever more amply 'afforded all the neceſſaries of life. Theſe are in-'deed our riches; here we have almoſt every thing 'we can want, for a very ſmall proportion of that 'expence which others are at to procure them.

'Such a ſituation, ſaid I, would be dangerous 'to many people, for if, as ſome have ſuppoſed, 'and, in regard to a great part of the world, I 'fear with truth, mutual wants are the great bands 'of ſociety, a perſon thus placed, would be in 'danger of feeling himſelf ſo independant a being,

'as

'as might tempt him to diſclaim all commerce
'with mankind, ſince he could not be benefitted
'by them. He would look on himſelf in the light of
'a rich man gaming with ſharpers, with a great
'probability of loſing, and a certainty of never be-
'ing a gainer.'

'I do not think the danger, replied Lady Mary,
'ſo great as you imagine, even though we allow
'that ſociety ariſes from the motive you mention.
'However fortune may have ſet us above any bo-
'dily wants, the mind will ſtill have many which
'would drive us into ſociety. Reaſon wiſhes for
'communication and improvement; benevolence
'longs for objects on which to exert itſelf; the ſo-
'cial comforts of friendſhip are ſo neceſſary to our
'happineſs, that it would be impoſſible not to en-
'deavour to enjoy them. In ſickneſs the langour
'of our minds makes us wiſh for the amuſements
'of converſation; in health the vivacity of our
'ſpirits leads us to deſire it. To avoid pain we
'ſeek after corporeal conveniencies, to procure
'pleaſure we aim at mental enjoyments; and I be-
'lieve, if we obſerve the general courſe of men's
'actions, we ſhall ſee them at leaſt as ſtrongly ac-
'tuated by the deſire of pleaſure, as by the fear
'of pain; though philoſophers, who have formed
'their judgments more on reaſon than the know-
'lege of mankind, may have thought otherwiſe.'

'I think, ſaid Mrs. Selvyn, ſomebody has aſ-
'ſerted, that he who could live without ſociety
'muſt be more than a God, or leſs than a man;
'the latter part of this aſſertion would have held
'good had he carried it farther, and ſaid lower
'than a brute, for there is no creature in the uni-
'verſe that is not linked into ſome ſociety, except
'we allow the exiſtence of that exploded and un-
'ſociable bird the Phœnix.'

'I am ſurprized, interrupted Lamont, to hear 'Ladies, who ſeclude themſelves from the world 'in this ſolitary though beautiful place, ſo ſtrong-'ly plead for ſociety.'

'Do you then, replied Mrs. Mancel, miſtake a 'croud for ſociety? I know not two things more 'oppoſite. How little ſociety is there to be found 'in what you call the world? It might more pro-'perly be compared to that ſtate of war, which 'Hobbes ſuppoſes the firſt condition of mankind. 'The ſame vanities, the ſame paſſions, the ſame 'ambition, reign in almoſt every breaſt; a con-'ſtant deſire to ſupplant, and a continual fear of 'being ſupplanted, keep the minds of thoſe who 'have any views at all in a ſtate of unremitted 'tumult and envy; and thoſe who have no aim in 'their actions are too irrational to have a notion 'of ſocial comforts. The love, as well as the 'pleaſures of ſociety, is founded in reaſon, and can-'not exiſt in thoſe minds which are filled with irra-'tional purſuits. Such indeed might claim a place 'in the ſociety of birds and beaſts, though few 'would deſerve to be admitted amongſt them, but 'that of reaſonable beings muſt be founded in rea-'ſon. What I underſtand by ſociety is a ſtate of 'mutual confidence, reciprocal ſervices, and correſ-'pondent affections; where numbers are thus uni-'ted, there will be a free communication of ſenti-'ments, and we ſhall then find ſpeech, that pecu-'liar bleſſing given to man, a valuable gift indeed; 'but when we ſee it reſtrained by ſuſpicion, or 'contaminated by detraction, we rather wonder 'that ſo dangerous a power was truſted with a 'race of beings, who ſeldom make a proper uſe of 'it.

'You will pity us perhaps becauſe we have no 'cards, no aſſemblies, no plays, no maſquerades,

'in

'in this ſolitary place. The firſt we might have if 'we choſe it, nor are they totally diſclaimed by us; 'but while we can with ſafety ſpeak our own 'thoughts, and with pleaſure read thoſe of wiſer 'perſons, we are not likely to be often reduced to 'them. We wiſh not for large aſſemblies, becauſe 'we do not deſire to drown converſation in noiſe; 'the amuſing fictions of dramatic writers are not 'neceſſary where nature affords us ſo many real de-'lights; and as we are not afraid of ſhewing our 'hearts, we have no occaſion to conceal our per-'ſons, in order to obtain either liberty of ſpeech or 'action,'

'What a ſerious world ſhould we have, madam, 'replied Lamont, if you were to regulate our con-'duct!'

'By no means, ſir, anſwered Mrs. Mancel, I 'wiſh to make only theſe alterations, to change 'noiſe for real mirth, flutter for ſettled chearfulneſs, 'affected wit for rational converſation; and would 'but have that degree of diſſipation baniſhed, which 'deprives people of time for reflection on the mo-'tives for, and conſequences of, their actions, that 'their pleaſures may be real and permament, and 'followed neither by repentance nor puniſhment. 'I would wiſh them to have leiſure to conſider by 'whom they were ſent into the world, and for 'what purpoſe, and to learn, that their happineſs 'conſiſts in fulfilling the deſign of their Maker, in 'providing for their own greateſt felicity, and 'contributing all that is in their power to the 'convenience of others.'

'You ſeem, madam, anſwered Lamont, to 'chooſe to make us all ſlaves to each other?

'No, ſir, replied Mrs. Mancel, I would only 'make you friends. Thoſe who are really ſuch 'are continually endeavouring to ſerve and oblige

'each other; this reciprocal communication of be-
'nefits ſhould be univerſal, and then we might
'with reaſon be fond of this world.'

'But, ſaid Lamont, this reciprocal communi-
'cation is impoſſible; what ſervice can a poor man
'do me? I may relieve him; but how can he re-
'turn the obligation?'

'It is he, anſwered Mrs. Mancel, who firſt con-
'ferred it, in giving you an opportunity of reliev-
'ing him. The pleaſure he has afforded you, is
'as far ſuperior to the gratification you have pro-
'cured him; as it is more bleſſed to give than to
'receive. You will perhaps ſay of him, as the
'apothecary in Romeo and Juliet does of himſelf,
'and tell me that,

"His poverty and not his will conſents."

'So let it be, and do you

"Pay his poverty and not his will."

'But certainly the higheſt ſatisfaction is on your
'ſide, and much obliged you are to that poverty,
'which enables you to obtain ſo great a gratifica-
'tion. But do not think the poor can make no ade-
'quate return. The greateſt pleaſure this world
'can give us is that of being beloved, but how
'ſhould we expect to obtain love without deſerving
'it? Did you ever ſee any one that was not fond
'of a dog that fondled him? Is it then poſſible to
'be inſenſible to the affection of a rational be-
'ing?'

'If Mr. Lamont, ſaid one of the viſitors, has
'not ſo high a ſenſe of the pleaſure of being grate-
'fully loved and eſteemed, we ought not to blame
'him; he, perhaps, like the greateſt part of the
'world,

'world, has not ſufficiently tried it, to be a pro-
'per judge; Mrs. Mancel is certainly very deep in
'this knowledge, and her opinion may be received
'as almoſt an infallible deciſion, ſince it is found-
'ed on long experience; and how nobly does ſhe
'calm the eager wiſhes of impotent gratitude, in
'declaring herſelf to be the moſt benefitted when
'ſhe confers obligations.'

This was uttered with ſo much warmth, and accompanied by looks ſo expreſſive of affection and grateful ſenſibility, that I plainly ſaw it proceeded from ſomething more than mere ſpeculative approbation. Lamont declared, that 'he was well con-
'vinced of the juſtneſs of what Mrs. Mancel had ſaid;
'at firſt it appeared rather a ſentiment uttered in
'ſport, than an opinion which could be proved by
'argument; but that a little reflexion on ones own
'ſenſations, would afford ſufficient conviction of
'the truth of her aſſertion, and that the general
'errors in the conduct of mankind plainly evinced
'they were of the ſame opinion, though they of-
'ten miſtook the means; for what, continued he,
'do people ruin themſelves by pomp and ſplendor,
'hazard their lives in the purſuits of ambition,
'and, as Shakeſpear ſays,

"Seek the bubble reputation even in the can-
"non's mouth;"

'But to gain popular applauſe and eſteem? For
'what do others throw away their time in uſeleſs
'civilities, and politely flatter all they meet, but
'in hopes of pleaſing? Even thoſe who make it
'their buſineſs to ſlander merit, and exaggerate
'the faults of others, do it from a deſire of raiſing
'themſelves in the opinion of mankind, by low-

'ering thoſe who may be brought into compariſon 'with them.'

During this converſation we had advanced within a field of the houſe, and the ladies ſtopped to take their leave, ſaying, 'as the evening was too 'far advanced to ſuffer them to make any ſtay with 'their good friends, they would not diſturb them 'by juſt entering their doors.' But as ſome parley enſued, ſeveral ladies who had ſeen us from the windows ran out, juſt to pay their compliments to the worthy inhabitants of Millenium-Hall. The pleaſure of this ſhort meeting ſeemed reciprocal, and both ſides appeared unwilling to part, but the ſetting ſun admoniſhed us to return.

The houſe to which we had ſo nearly approached was a very large old manſion, and its inhabitants ſo numerous, that I was curious to know how ſo many became aſſembled together. Mrs. Maynard ſaid, that 'if ſhe did not ſatisfy my inquiries, I 'was in great danger of remaining ignorant of the 'nature of that ſociety, as her friends would not 'be eaſily prevailed with to break ſilence on that 'ſubject.

'Theſe ladies, ſaid ſhe, long beheld with com-'paſſion the wretched fate of thoſe women, who 'from ſcantineſs of fortune, and pride of family, 'are reduced to become dependant, and to bear all 'the inſolence of wealth, from ſuch as will receive 'them into their families; theſe, though in ſome 'meaſure voluntary ſlaves, yet ſuffer all the evils 'of the ſevereſt ſervitude, and are, I believe, the 'moſt unhappy part of the creation. Sometimes 'they are unqualified to gain a maintenance, edu-'cated as is called, genteelly, or in other words 'idly, they are ignorant of every thing that might 'give them ſuperior abilities to the lower rank of 'people, and their birth renders them leſs accept-

'able

'able ſervants to many, who have not generoſity 'enough to treat them as they ought, and yet do 'not chooſe while they are acting the miſtreſs, 'perhaps too haughtily, to feel the ſecret reproach-'es of their own hearts. Poſſibly pride may ſtill 'oftener reduce theſe indigent gentlewomen into 'this wretched ſtate of dependance, and therefore 'the world is leſs inclined to pity them; but my 'friends ſee human weakneſs in another light.

'They imagine themſelves too far from perfec-'tion to have any title to expect it in others, and 'think, that there are none in whom pride is ſo ex-'cuſable as in the poor; for if there is the ſmalleſt 'ſpark of it in their compoſitions, and who is en-'tirely free from it, the frequent neglects and in-'dignities they meet with muſt keep it continually 'alive. If we are deſpiſed for caſual deficiencies, 'we naturally ſeek in ourſelves for ſome merit, to 'reſtore us to that dignity in our own eyes, which 'thoſe humiliating mortifications would otherwiſe 'debaſe. Thus we learn to ſet too great a value 'on what we ſtill poſſeſs, whether advantages of 'birth, education, or natural talents; any thing 'will ſerve for a reſource to mortified pride; and 'as every thing grows by oppoſition and perſecu-'tion, we cannot wonder, if the opinion of our-'ſelves increaſes by the ſame means.

'To perſons in this way of thinking, the pride 'which reduces many to be, what is called with too 'little humanity, toad-eaters, does not render them 'unworthy of compaſſion. Therefore for the re-'lief of this race they bought that large manſion.

'They drew up ſeveral regulations, to ſecure the 'peace and good order of the ſociety they deſigned 'to form, and ſending a copy of it to all their ac-'quaintance, told them, that any gentleman's 'daughter, whoſe character was unblemiſhed,

'might, if she desired it, on those terms be received 'into that society.'

I begged, if it was not too much trouble, to know what the regulations were.

'The first rule, continued Mrs. Maynard, was, 'that whoever chose to take the benefit of this 'asylum, for such I may justly call it, should 'deposite, in the hands of a person appointed for 'that purpose, whatever fortune she was mistress 'of, the security being approved by her and her 'friends, and remaining in her possession. Whenever she leaves the society, her fortune should be 'repaid her, the interest in the mean time being 'appropriated to the use of the community. The 'great design of this was to preserve an exact 'equality between them; for it was not expected, 'that the interest of any of their fortunes should 'pay the allowance they were to have for their 'cloaths. If any appeared to have secreted part of 'her fortune she should be expelled the society.

'Secondly, Each person to have a bed-chamber to 'herself, but the eating-parlour and drawing-room 'in common.

'Thirdly, All things for rational amusement 'shall be provided for the society; musical instruments, of whatever sort they shall chuse, books, 'tents for work, and in short conveniences for every 'kind of employment.

'Fourthly, They must conform to very regular 'hours.

'Fifthly, An house-keeper will be appointed to 'manage the household affairs, and a sufficient 'number of servants provided.

'Sixthly, Each person shall alternately, a week 'at a time, preside at the table, and give what family orders may be requisite.

'Seventhly, Twenty five-pounds a year shall be

'allowed

'allowed to each perſon for her cloaths and pocket 'expences.

'Eighthly, Their dreſs ſhall be quite plain and 'neat, but not particular nor uniform.

'Ninthly, The expences of ſickneſs ſhall be diſ-'charged by the patroneſſes of this ſociety.

'Tenthly, If any one of the ladies behaves with 'imprudence ſhe ſhall be diſmiſſed, and her fortune 'returned; likewiſe if any ſhould by turbulence or 'pettiſhneſs of temper, diſturb the ſociety, it ſhall 'be in the power of the reſt of them to expel 'her; a majority of three parts of the community 'being for the expulſion, and this to be performed 'by ballotting.

'Eleventhly, A good table and every thing ſuit-'able to the convenience of a gentlewoman, ſhall 'be provided.

'Theſe were the principal articles; and in leſs 'than two months a dozen perſons of different ages 'were eſtabliſhed in the houſe, who ſeemed tho-'roughly delighted with their ſituation. At the 'requeſt of one of them, who had a friend that 'wiſhed to be admitted, an order was ſoon added, 'by the conſent of all, that gave leave for any 'perſon who would conform exactly to the rules 'of the houſe, to board there for ſuch length of 'time, as ſhould be agreeable to herſelf and the 'ſociety, for the price of an hundred pounds 'a year, fifty for any child ſhe might have, twenty 'for a maid-ſervant, and thirty for a man.

'The number of this ſociety is now increaſed to 'thirty, four ladies board there, one of whom 'has two children, and there are five young 'ladies, the eldeſt not above twelve years old, 'whoſe mothers being dead, and their families 'related to ſome of the ſociety, their kinſwomen 'have undertaken their education; theſe likewiſe

'pay an hundred pounds a year each. It has 'frequently happened, that widow ladies have 'come into this ſociety, till their year of deep 'mourning was expired.

'With theſe aſſiſtances the ſociety now ſubſiſts 'with the utmoſt plenty and convenience, without 'any additional expence to my good friends, ex-'cept a communication of what this park affords; 'as our ſteward provides them with every thing, 'and has the entire direction of the houſehold 'affairs, which he executes with the moſt ſenſible 'œconomy.'

'I ſhould imagine, ſaid I, it were very difficult to 'preſerve a comfortable harmony among ſo many 'perſons, and conſequently ſuch variety of tem-'pers?'

'Certainly, anſwered Mrs. Maynard, it is not 'without its difficulties. For the firſt year of this 'eſtabliſhment my friends dedicated moſt of their 'time and attention to this new community, who 'were every day either at the hall, or theſe ladies 'with them, endeavouring to cultivate in this 'ſiſterhood that ſort of diſpoſition which is moſt 'productive of peace. By their example and 'ſuggeſtions, (for it is difficult to give unreſerved 'advice where you may be ſuſpected of a deſign to 'dictate) by their examples and ſuggeſtions there-'fore, they led them to induſtry, and ſhewed it 'to be neceſſary to all ſtations, as the baſis of 'almoſt every virtue. An idle mind, like fallow 'ground, is the ſoil for every weed to grow in; in 'it vice ſtrengthens, the ſeed of every vanity 'flouriſhes unmoleſted and luxuriant; diſcontent, 'malignity, ill humour, ſpread far and wide, and the 'mind becomes a chaos, which it is beyond hu-'man power to call into order and beauty. This 'therefore my good friends laboured to expel from

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'their infant eſtabliſhment. They taught them 'that it was the duty of every perſon to be of ſer-'vice to others. That thoſe whoſe hands and 'minds were by the favours of fortune exempt 'from the neceſſity of labouring for their own ſup-'port, ought to be employed for ſuch as are deſti-'tute of theſe advantages. They got this ſiſterhood 'to join with them in working for the poor people, 'in viſiting, in admoniſhing, in teaching them 'wherever their ſituations required theſe ſervices. 'Where they found that any of theſe ladies had a 'taſte for gardening, drawing, muſic, reading, 'or any manual or mental art, they cultivated it, 'aſſiſted them in the pleaſanteſt means, and by va-'rious little ſchemes have kept up theſe inclinations 'with all the ſpirit of purſuit, which is requiſite to 'preſerve moſt minds from that ſtate of languidneſs 'and inactivity, whereby life is rendered weariſome 'to thoſe who have never found it unfortunate.

'By ſome regulations made as occaſions occurred, 'all burdenſome forms are expelled. The whole 'ſociety indeed muſt aſſemble at morning and 'evening prayers, and at meals, if ſickneſs does 'not prevent, but every other ceremonious depen-'dance is baniſhed; they form into different 'parties of amuſement as beſt ſuit their inclina-'tions, and ſometimes when we go to ſpend the 'afternoon there, we ſhall find a party at cards in 'one room, in another ſome at work, while one is 'reading aloud, and in a ſeparate chamber a ſet 'joining in a little concert, though none of them 'are great proficients in muſic; while two or three 'ſhall be retired into their own rooms, ſome go 'out to take the air, for it has ſeldom happened 'to them to have leſs than two boarders at a time 'who each keep an equipage; while others ſhall be 'amuſing themſelves in the garden, or walking in

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'the very pleaſant meadows which ſurround their 'houſe.

'As no one is obliged to ſtay a minute longer in 'company than ſhe chuſes, ſhe naturally retires 'as ſoon as it grows diſpleaſing to her, and does 'not return till ſhe is prompted by inclination, and 'conſquently well diſpoſed to amuſe and be amuſed. 'They live in the very ſtrict practice of all religious 'duties; and it is not to be imagined how much 'good they have done in the neighbourhood; how 'much by their care the manners of the poorer 'people are reformed, and their neceſſities relieved, 'though without the diſtribution of much money; 'I ſay much, becauſe, ſmall as their incomes are, 'there are many who impart out of that little to 'thoſe who have much leſs.

'Their viſits to us are frequent, and we are on 'ſuch a footing, that they never impede any of our 'employments. My friends always inſiſted when 'they waited on the community, that not one of 'the ſiſterhood ſhould diſcontinue whatever they 'found her engaged in; this gave them the hint 'to do the ſame by us, and it is a rule, that no 'book is thrown aſide, no pen laid down at their 'entrance. There are always ſome of us manually 'employed, who are at leiſure to converſe, and 'if the viſit is not very ſhort, part of it is generally 'ſpent in hearing one of the girls read aloud, who 'take it by turns through a great part of the day; 'the only difference made for this addition to the 'company is a change of books, that they may 'not hear only part of a ſubject, and begin by a 'broken thread. Thus they give no interruption, 'and therefore neither trouble us, nor are them-'ſelves ſcrupulous about coming, ſo that few days 'paſs without our ſeeing ſome of them, though fre-

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'quently only time enough to accompany us in 'our walks, or partake of our muſic.'

'Have you not, ſaid Lamont, been obliged to 'expel many from the community? Since you do 'not allow petulancy of temper, nor any light-'neſs of conduct, I ſhould expect a continual 'revolution.'

'By no means, anſwered Mrs. Maynard, ſince 'the eſtabliſhment of the community, there has 'been but one expelled; and one finding ſhe was 'in danger of incurring the ſame ſentence, and I 'believe inwardly diſguſted with a country life, 'retired of her own free choice. Some more have 'rendered themſelves ſo diſagreeable, that the 'queſtion has been put to the ballot; but the fear 'of being diſmiſſed made them ſo diligent to get 'the majority on their ſide, before the hour ap-'pointed for deciſion arrived, that it has been de-'termined in their favour, and the earneſt deſire 'not to be brought into the ſame hazard again, 'has induced them to mend their tempers, and 'ſome of theſe are now the moſt amiable people 'in the whole community.

'As for levity of conduct they are pretty 'well ſecured from it, by being expoſed to few 'temptations in this retired place.

'Some, as in the courſe of nature muſt happen, 'have died, and moſt of them bequeathed what 'little they had towards conſtituting a fund for the 'continuation of the community. More of them 'have married; ſome to perſons who knew them 'before, others to gentlemen in the neighbourhood, 'or ſuch as happened to come into it; to 'whom their admirable conduct recommended 'them.'

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I could not help exclaiming, 'In what a heaven do you live, thus ſurrounded by people who owe all their happineſs to your goodneſs! This is, indeed, imitating your Creator, and in ſuch proportion as your faculties will admit, partaking of his felicity, ſince you can no where caſt your eyes, without beholding numbers who derive every earthly good from your bounty, and are indebted to your care and example for a reaſonable hope of eternal happineſs.'

'I will not, ſaid Mrs. Maynard, give up my ſhare of the felicity you ſo juſtly imagine theſe ladies muſt enjoy, though I have no part in what occaſions it. When I reflect on all the bleſſings they impart, and ſee how happineſs flows, as it were, in an uninterrupted current from their hands and lips, I am overwhelmed with gratitude to the Almighty diſpoſer of my fate, for having ſo mercifully thrown me into ſuch a ſcene of felicity, where every hour yields true heart-felt joy, and fills me with thankſgivings to Him, who enables them thus to diſpenſe innumerable bleſſings, and ſo greatly rewards them already by the joyful conſciouſneſs of having obeyed him.'

The Ladies at this time were at too great a diſtance to hear our converſation; for not chuſing to be preſent while their actions were the ſubjects of diſcourſe, they had gradually ſtrayed from us. Upon enquiring of my couſin, whether the perſons in the large community we had been talking of brought any fortunes with them, ſhe told me that 'moſt of them had a trifle, ſome not more than an hundred pounds. That in general the ladies choſe to admit thoſe who had leaſt, as their neceſſities were greateſt, except where ſome particular circumſtances rendered protection more requiſite

'quiſite to others. That the houſe not being 'large enough to contain more than were already 'eſtabliſhed in it, they have been obliged to refuſe 'admiſſion to many, and eſpecially ſome young 'women of near two thouſand pounds fortune, 'the expenſive turn of the world now being ſuch, 'that no gentlewoman can live genteelly on the 'intereſt of that ſum, and they prefer this Society 'to a retirement in a country town. Some who 'wiſhed to board, have likewiſe been refuſed. As 'the expences of the firſt community, fall ſo far 'ſhort of their expectation, and the ſums appro-'priated for that purpoſe, they determined to haz-'ard another of the ſame kind, and have juſt con-'cluded a treaty for a ſtill larger manſion, at about 'three miles diſtance, and by the perſons now 'waiting for it, they have reaſon to believe it will 'not be leſs ſucceſsful than the other, nor more 'expenſive; but ſhould they be miſtaken in that 'particular, they have laid aſide a fund ſufficient 'to diſcharge it.' Their ſcheme I find is to have ſome of the ladies down to Millennium Hall, as ſoon as they have made the purchaſe, and there they are to remain, while the neceſſary repairs and additions are making to the houſe deſigned for their habitation, which they imagine will not be compleated in leſs than half a year. They hope, by having the firſt admitted part of the community thus in the houſe with them for ſo long a time, to compenſate, in a good degree, for the diſadvantages of being ſettled ſo much farther from them. The ſiſterhood of the other ſociety, likewiſe, in pity to thoſe who are expoſed to the ſame ſufferings from which they have been delivered, have offered to croud themſelves for a few months, to leave vacant rooms for ſome who are deſtined to the other houſe, till they can be there accommodated. Theſe

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alſo will be fitted for their new way of life, and taught to aim at the happineſs enjoyed in this community, by the ſame means that they have attained to it.

Our ſubject ended with our walk. Supper was ſerved as ſoon as we entered the houſe, and general converſation concluded the evening.

Had I not been led by ſeveral facts to repeat already ſo many converſations, I ſhould be induced not to bury all that paſſed at this time in ſilence; but though I have taken the liberty, when the relation of facts naturally led to it, to communicate ſuch diſcourſes as were pertinent to the ſubject, it would be preſuming too far on your time, to repeat converſations which did not ſerve to illuſtrate any particular actions, however worthy they may be of recollection. I ſhall therefore only ſay, that it was not with leſs reluctance I retired to my chamber, at the hour of bed-time, than the night before.

The next morning proved rainy, which prevented me from making any early excurſion. But as it cleared up about eleven o'clock, Lamont and I went into the garden, to enjoy the fragrance which every herb and flower exhales at this time of the year, after the deſirable refreſhment of gentle ſhowers. I conducted him to the flower garden, which had ſo much delighted me the morning before; and we had not paid due admiration to all the vegetable beauties there exhibited to our view, when Mrs. Maynard joined us.

I told her, 'It was but a poor compliment to 'her converſation, to ſay, I longed for her com-'pany, ſince now my curioſity might occaſion that 'impatience, which I ſhould nevertheleſs have 'felt, had I not been left in painful ſuſpence, by

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'the interruption we had received the day before,
'in the midſt of her narrative.'

'It would be unnatural, ſaid ſhe, for a woman
'to quarrel with curioſity; ſo far from complain-
'ing of yours, I am come merely with a deſign
'to gratify it, and only expect you will judge of
'my deſire to oblige you, by my readineſs in obey-
'ing your commands, were I myſelf the ſub-
'ject, the motive for my obedience might be equi-
'vocal.'

Miſs MANCEL and Mrs. MORGAN's Hiſtory continued.

I Think, continued Mrs. Maynard, we left Miſs Melvyn requiring to be confronted by her accuſer, a requeſt which her mother-in-law was not inclined to grant; for though in her dealings with young Simon, ſhe had perceived ſuch a degree of ſollicitude for his own intereſt, and ſuch flagrant proofs of want of integrity, that ſhe did not doubt but that by promiſing him the farm, on rather better terms than ſhe had yet conſented to, he might be prevailed with to join ſo far in her ſcheme, as to aſſert any thing to Sir Charles, yet ſhe dared not venture to produce him face to face to Miſs Melvyn, fearing leſt his aſſurance ſhould fail him on ſo ſevere a trial.

She replied, therefore, that, 'the proofs were
'too ſtrong to admit of doubt, but ſhe could not
'think of expoſing Miſs Melvyn to the mortifica-
'tion of hearing her depravity witneſſed by, per-
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'haps, the laſt perſon whom ſhe expected ſhould 'acknowledge it. Beſides, that by ſuch an eclat the 'diſgrace muſt infallibly become public, and ſhe 'be deprived of the only means left her of reſcuing 'her reputation from that infamy, to which, in a 'very ſhort time, it muſt have been irrecoverably 'condemned; for it could not be ſuppoſed, that Mr. 'Morgan would accept as his wife a woman with 'a ſullied character.'

Miſs Melvyn was almoſt diſtracted, at being both ſo injuriouſly accuſed, and denied the liberty of defending herſelf; ſhe begged, ſhe intreated, on her knees, that Sir Charles would not ſuffer her to fall a prey to ſuch undeſerved malice. She aſſerted her innocence in the ſtrongeſt and moſt perſuaſive terms, and inſiſted ſo warmly on her demand of being confronted with her accuſers, that her father grew inclined to grant her juſt requeſt. Lady Melvyn perceiving he began to comply, repeated her refuſal in the moſt peremptory manner; and declaring to Miſs Melvyn, that ſhe had no other choice left her, but either to reſolve to marry Mr. Morgan, or to be expoſed to ſhame, in being publicly diſclaimed by her parents, who would no longer ſuffer her to remain in their houſe, led Sir Charles out of the room; and he, though reluctant, dared not refuſe to accompany her.

Miſs Melvyn was now left to reflect on this dreadful alternative. Filled with horror at the ſhocking conduct of her mother-in-law, terrified with her threats, and ſenſible there was no villany ſhe was not capable of perpetrating, rather than give up a point ſhe was thus determined to carry, ſhe was incapable of forming any reſolution. She ran to her friend, to ſeek from her that advice and conſolation, which her own diſtracted thoughts could not afford her.

Miſs

Miſs Mancel was ſo ſtruck with the terror and amazement which were ſtill impreſſed on Miſs Melvyn's countenance, that ſhe had not for ſome time courage to aſk the cauſe. Trembling with fears of ſhe knew not what, ſhe embraced her diſtreſſed friend with an air of ſuch tender, though ſilent ſympathy, as ſoftened the horror of Miſs Melvyn's mind, and brought a ſhower of tears to her relief, which at length enabled her to relate all that had paſſed between her and her parents. Louiſa found it much eaſier to join in her friend's grief than to adminiſter conſolation. She knew not what to adviſe; two artleſs, virtuous young women were ill qualified to contend with lady Melvyn, eſpecially in an affair which could not be rendered public without hazarding Miſs Melvyn's character; for reputation is ſo delicate a thing, that the leaſt ſurmize caſts a blemiſh on it; the woman who is ſuſpected is diſgraced; and though lady Melvyn did not ſtand high in the public opinion, yet it was ſcarcely poſſible for any one to believe ſhe could be guilty of ſuch flagrant wickedneſs.

Miſs Melvyn had a very ſtrong diſlike to Mr. Morgan, whoſe diſpoſition appeared as ill ſuited to her's as his age; to enter into wedlock without any proſpect of ſocial happineſs, ſeemed to her one of the greateſt misfortunes in life; but what was ſtill of more weight in her eſtimation, ſhe thought it the higheſt injuſtice to marry a man whom ſhe could not love, as well as a very criminal mockery of the moſt ſolemn vows. On the other ſide ſhe conſidered, that to preſerve her reputation was not only neceſſary to her own happineſs, but a duty to ſociety. 'It is true, ſaid ſhe, I am not placed in a very 'conſpicuous ſphere of life, but I am far from being 'of a rank ſo obſcure, that my actions will affect no 'one but myſelf; nor indeed do I know any ſo low,

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'but that they have their equals who may copy 'after them, if they have no inferiors. The care 'of our virtue we owe to ourſelves, the preſerva- 'tion of our characters is due to the world, and 'both are required by Him, who commands us to 'preſerve ourſelves pure and unpolluted, and to 'contribute as far as we are able to the well-being 'of all his creatures. Example is the means given 'univerſally to all whereby to benefit ſociety. I 'therefore look on it as one of our principal duties, 'to avoid every imputation of evil; for vice ap- 'pears more or leſs hateful, as it becomes more or 'leſs familiar. Every vicious perſon abates the 'horror which it ſhould naturally excite in a vir- 'tuous mind. There is nothing ſo odious, to which 'cuſtom will not in ſome degree reconcile us; can 'we expect then, that vice, which is not without 'its allurements, ſhould alone retain all its defor- 'mity, when we are familiarized to its appear- 'ance. I ſhould never therefore eſteem myſelf in- 'nocent, however pure my actions, if I incurred 'the reputation of being otherwiſe, when it was in 'my power to avoid it. With this way of think- 'ing, my Louiſa, you may imagine that I might 'be brought to believe it my duty to ſacrifice my 'eaſe of mind, to the preſervation of my charac- 'ter; but in my caſe, there is no choice; I muſt 'either add to the contamination of a very profli- 'gate world, or, in the face of Heaven, enter into 'the moſt ſolemn vows to love a man, whom the 'moſt I can do, is not to hate. This is wilful 'perjury. In ſuch an alternative duty cannot direct 'me, and miſery muſt follow my deciſion, let me 'determine as I will.'

In this irreſolution, Miſs Melvyn left her friend, but the vent ſhe had given to her grief had greatly calmed her ſpirits, and reſtored her to the power of reflection.

reflexion. At her entrance into the houſe, ſhe met Lady Melvyn, who with a very ſtern countenance, ordered her to go and entertain Mr. Morgan, who waited for her in the parlour. She found him alone, and as he began to renew his addreſſes, which a repulſe from her had not diſcouraged, ſince he hoped to ſucceed by the influence her parents had over her, ſhe immediately formed the reſolution of endeavouring to make him relinquiſh his pretenſions, in hopes, that if the refuſal came from him, he might become the object of her mother's indignation, and her perſecution might drop, at leaſt for a time. She therefore frankly told him, that 'Tho' 'her affections were intirely diſengaged, yet he 'was ſo very repugnant to them, that it was im-'poſſible ſhe ſhould ever feel that regard for him, 'which he had a right to expect from his wife; 'and therefore intreated him, in conſideration of 'his own happineſs, if her's were indifferent to 'him, not to perſiſt in a purſuit, which, if ſucceſs-'ful, could not anſwer his hopes, nor reduce her 'to render herſelf wretched by becoming his wife, 'or to exaſperate her parents by refuſing him.' She then added all her heart could ſuggeſt to flatter him into compliance with this requeſt.

Mr. Morgan's foible was not an exceſs of delicacy; he told her plainly, 'He admired her elo-'quence prodigiouſly, but that there was more rhe-'toric in her beauty, than any compoſition of 'words could contain; which pleading in direct 'contradiction to all ſhe had ſaid, ſhe muſt excuſe 'him, if he was influenced by the more pow-'erful oratory of her charms; and her good 'ſenſe and unexceptionable conduct convinced 'him, that when it became her duty to love him, 'ſhe would no longer remain indifferent.'

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All Miſs. Melvyn could urge to ſhew him this was but a very poor dependance, had no ſort of weight, and he parted from her only more determined to haſten the concluſion of their marriage.

Lady Melvyn had not been idle all this time; ſhe had prevailed on young Simon to acquieſce in the queſtions ſhe put to him before Sir Charles, either by giving ſhort anſwers, or by down caſt eyes, which ſignified aſſent. With this Sir Charles acquainted Miſs Melvyn, and inſiſted on her not thinking of expoſing herſelf to the indignity of having the whole affair diſcuſſed in her preſence. All the indignation that undeſerved calumny can excite in an innocent mind, could not have enabled Miſs Melvyn to bear being charged before ſo low a creature, with a paſſion for him, and ſtill leſs to have heard the ſuborned wretch pretend to confeſs it. She therefore found no difficulty in obeying her father in that particular, and rather choſe to ſubmit to the imputation, than to undergo the ſhame which ſhe muſt have ſuffered in endeavouring to confute it. She attempted to perſuade Sir Charles, 'To permit her to ſtay in the houſe under 'what reſtrictions he and his lady ſhould think proper, till her conduct ſhould ſufficiently convince 'him of her innocence, and not to force her into 'a hated marriage, or unjuſtly expoſe her to diſgrace and infamy.' Her tears and intreaties would ſoon have ſoftened his heart; and as far as he dared, he ſhewed an inclination to comply with ſo reaſonable a propoſal; but his lady eaſily obliged him to retract, and to deprive Miſs Melvyn of all hopes of any mi igation of the ſentence already pronounced againſt her.

Could ſhe without the loſs of reputation have fled to a remote part of the kingdom, and have hid herſelf in ſome obſcure cottage, though reduced to labour

labour for a ſubſiſtence, ſhe would have thought it a ſtate far more eligible than becoming Mr. Morgan's wife; but if ſhe thus turned fugitive and wanderer, in what light could ſhe expect to be ſeen by the world; eſpecially, as Lady Melvyn would infallibly, to remove any blame from herſelf, be liberal in her aſperſions? Where ſhe ſhould be unknown, whatever diſgrace might be affixed to her name, ſhe herſelf might eſcape cenſure; but yet ſhe would not be leſs guilty of a violation of her duty to ſociety, ſince ſhe muſt appear very culpable to thoſe who knew her, and contribute to the depravity of others, as far as was in her power, by an example, which her motives being unknown, would appear a very bad one.

This conſideration determined her to ſacrifice her peace to her character; for by having told Mr. Morgan the true ſtate of her heart, ſhe had acquitted herſelf from any charge of attempting, by the gift of her hand, to deceive him into a belief that he was the object of her affections. She ſtill had ſcruples about entering into the matrimonial ſtate, on motives ſo different from thoſe which ought to influence every one in an union of that kind: theſe were not to be removed, but ſhe imagined this might in ſome meaſure be excuſed, as the leaſt culpable part ſhe could act; and ſince man was herein neither her judge nor accuſer, ſhe hoped the integrity of her mind would be received as ſome alleviation of a fault ſhe was thus forced to commit, ſince ſhe was determined in the ſtricteſt manner to adhere to every duty of her ſtation.

Having formed this reſolution, ſhe went to conſult her friend upon it, who was a perſon leſs perplexed, though ſcarcely leſs concerned, as their affections were ſo ſtrongly united, that one could not ſuffer without the other's feeling equal

pain, might poſſibly be a calmer judge in ſo delicate a point. Louiſa ſubſcribed to her friend's ſentiments on the occaſion, only 'deſired her to con-'ſider well, whether ſhe ſhould be able to bear all 'the trials ſhe might meet with in the married 'ſtate, when ſhe was entirely indifferent to her 'huſband.'

'My proſpect, ſaid Miſs Melvyn, I am ſenſible 'is extremely melancholy. All inclination muſt 'now be laid aſide, and duty muſt become my ſole 'guide and director. Happineſs is beyond my 'view; I cannot even hope for eaſe, ſince I muſt 'keep a conſtant reſtraint on my very thoughts. 'Indifference will become criminal; and if I can-'not conquer it, to conceal it at leaſt will be a 'duty. I have learnt to ſuffer, but was never yet 'taught diſguiſe and hypocriſy; herein will conſiſt 'my greateſt difficulty; I abhor deceit, and yet 'muſt not ſhew the real ſentiments of my heart. 'Linked in ſociety with a man I cannot love, the 'world can afford me no pleaſure, indeed no com-'fort, for I am inſenſible to all joy but what ariſes 'from the ſocial affections. The grave, I confeſs, 'appears to me far more eligible than this marri-'age, for I might there hope to be at peace. Mr. 'Morgan's fortune is large, but his mind is nar-'row and ungenerous, and his temper plainly not 'good. If he really loved me, he could not ſuffer 'me to be forced into a marriage which he well 'knows I deteſt: a knowledge which will not 'mend my fate, moſt certainly.

'Could I enjoy the pleaſures of ſelf-approbation, 'it would be impoſſible to be very wretched, but 'the moſt exact performance of my duty will not 'yield me that gratification, ſince I cannot be per-'fectly ſatisfied that I do right, in marrying a man 'ſo very diſagreeable to me. I fear the pride of

'reputation

'reputation influencies me more than I imagine, 'and though it is as juſtifiable as any pride, yet 'ſtill it is certainly no virtue.'

'When I reflect, ſaid ſhe, afterwards, on the 'ſtep I am going to take, my terrors are inexpreſ-'ſible; how dreadful is it at my age, when nature 'ſeems to promiſe me ſo many years of life, to 'doom myſelf to a ſtate of wretchedneſs, which 'death alone can terminate, and wherein I muſt 'bury all my ſorrows in ſilence, without even the 'melancholy relief of pouring them forth in the 'boſom of my friend, and ſeeking, from her tender 'participation, the only conſolation I could receive! 'for after this dreaded union is compleated, duty 'will forbid me to make my diſtreſſes known, even 'to my Louiſa; I muſt not then expoſe the faults 'of him whoſe ſlighteſt failings I ought to conceal. 'One only hope remains, that you, my firſt and 'deareſt friend, will not abandon me; that what-'ever cloud of melancholy may hang over my 'mind, yet you will ſtill bear with me, and remove 'your abode to a place where I may have the con-'ſolation of your company. If it be in my power 'to make my houſe a comfortable habitation to my 'Louiſa, I cannot be entirely wretched.'

Miſs Mancel gave her the tendereſt aſſurances of fixing at leaſt in her neighbourhood, ſince a ſecond paradiſe could not recompenſe her for the loſs of her ſociety; and that on no terms could ſhe prevail on herſelf to continue in a houſe where ſhe muſt ſee that wretched Simon, who had been a vile inſtrument in reducing her friend to that diſtreſsful ſituation. This gleam of comfort was a very ſeaſonable relief to Miſs Melvyn's dejected ſpirits, and gave ſome reſpite to her tears.

As ſoon as ſhe returned home, ſhe acquainted Sir Charles and Lady Melvyn with her reſolution, who ſoon communicated it to Mr. Morgan; and nothing was now thought of but haſtening the wedding as much as poſſible.

'I wonder, interrupted Lamont, how Miſs 'Melvyn could bring herſelf to let her mother-in-'law have ſuch an opportunity of exulting in the 'ſucceſs of her deteſtable arts.'

'That, replied Mrs. Maynard, was a conſidera-'tion which had no weight with her, nor ſhould 'it indeed be any mortification to our pride, that 'deceit and cunning have triumphed over us. 'Wickedneſs ſerves itſelf by weapons which we 'would not uſe, and if we are wounded with them, 'we have no more reaſon to be mortified, than a 'man would have to think his courage diſgraced, 'becauſe when he lay ſleeping in his bed, he was 'taken priſoner by a body of armed men. To be 'circumvented by cunning, muſt ever be the fate, 'but never the diſgrace of the artleſs.'

As Miſs Melvyn's compliance procured her a greater degree of favour at home than ſhe had ever before enjoyed, Miſs Mancel was ſuffered to come to the houſe, and met with an obliging reception from the whole family. Her continual preſence there was a great ſupport to her friend in her very diſagreeable ſituation, and after indulging her ſorrow in their private converſation, and mingling their ſymphathetic tears, ſhe was the better able to endure the reſtraint which ſhe was obliged to undergo, when any other perſon was preſent.

The dreaded day fixed on for this unhappy union ſoon came, and Miſs Melvyn received Mr. Morgan's hand and name with all the fortitude ſhe could aſſume; but her diſtreſs was viſible to all, even

even to Mr. Morgan, who was ſo little touched with it, that it proved no abatement to his joy; a ſymptom of ſuch indelicacy of mind, as increaſed his bride's grief and apprehenſions.

The day after their marriage, Mrs. Morgan aſked his permiſſion to invite Miſs Mancel to his houſe, to which he anſwered, 'Madam, my wife muſt 'have no other companion or friend but her huſ-'band; I ſhall never be averſe to your ſeeing com-'pany, but intimates I forbid; I ſhall not chooſe 'to have my faults diſcuſſed between you and your '*friend*.'

Mrs. Morgan was not much leſs ſtunned by this reply, than if ſhe had been ſtruck with lightening. Practiſed as ſhe had long been in commanding her paſſions and inclinations, a torrent of tears forced their way.

'I did not want this proof, reſumed Mr. Mor-'gan, that I have but a ſmall ſhare of your affecti-'ons; and were I inclined to grant your requeſt, 'you could not have found a better means of pre-'venting it; for I will have no perſon in my houſe 'more beloved than myſelf. When you have no 'other friend, added he with a malicious ſmile, I 'may hope for the honour of that title.'

Mrs. Morgan was ſo well convinced before of the littleneſs of his mind, that ſhe was more afflicted than ſurprized at this inſtance of it, and wiſhed he would not have rendered it more difficult to eſteem him, by ſo openly profeſſing his ungenerous temper. However ſhe ſilently acquieſced; but that her friend might not feel the pain of believing herſelf neglect-ed, ſhe was obliged to tell her what had paſſed.

The new married couple ſtaid but two days longer at Sir Charles's. Fortunately Mr. Morgan ſpent the laſt day abroad in paying viſits in the neigh-bourhood, which gave the two unhappy friends lei-

ſure to lament their ill fortune in this cruel ſeparation, without giving the cauſe of it any new offence. They took a melancholy leave that night, fearing that even a correſpondence between them might be conſiderably reſtrained by this arbitrary huſband, who ſeemed to think his wife's affections were to be won by force, not by gentleneſs and generous confidence.

This was the ſevereſt affliction they had ever yet experienced, or indeed were capable of feeling. United from their childhood, the connection of ſoul and body did not ſeem more indiſſoluble, nor were ever divided with greater pain. They foreſaw no end to this cruel ſeparation; for they could not expect that a huſband's complaiſance to his wife ſhould increaſe after he ceaſed to be a bridegroom. Louiſa indeed, who wiſhed if poſſible to reconcile her friend to her fate, pretended to hope that her good conduct might in time enlarge his mind, and cure him of that mean ſuſpicious temper, which then made him fear to have his faults expoſed by a wife, whoſe chief endeavour would be to conceal them.

But ſuch diſtant views afforded no conſolation to Mrs. Morgan's affectionate heart; the preſent pain engaged her thoughts too much to ſuffer her to look ſo far off for comfort. She had flattered herſelf not only with the hopes of enjoying Miſs Mancel's company, but of delivering her from all the difficulties of her ſituation, in offering her a protection from inſult or poverty. To be diſappointed of ſo delightful a proſpect was her greateſt affliction, and ſat much heavier on her mind, than the loſs of her beloved ſociety.

The evening was far ſpent, when Lady Melvyn found them drowned in tears, anticipating the pangs of parting, the employment of that whole day;

day; and as her ladyſhip's hatred for her daughter-in-law was much ſubſided, ſince ſhe no longer feared the obſervation of her too-virtuous eye, her natural diſpoſition inclined her to prevent the wife's diſcovering her real ſentiments to her huſband; ſhe therefore reminded them, that Mr. Morgan muſt then be on his way home, and adviſed, that by all means they ſhould part before his return, leſt he ſhould be witneſs of a ſorrow which he would take amiſs. They were ſenſible that in this her ladyſhip judged well, and Louiſa's fear of occaſioning any additional uneaſineſs to her friend, gave her reſolution and ſtrength to take a laſt farewel. Mrs. Morgan's maid attended her home, as ſhe was too much affected to be able to perform that little walk without ſome ſupport. Mrs. Morgan's condition was ſtill more deplorable; more dead than alive, ſhe followed Louiſa's ſteps with eager eyes, till a turning in the road robbed her of the ſight of her friend; and then, as if her eyes had no other employment worthy of them left, they were again overwhelmed in tears. Lady Melvyn found her incapable of conſolation; but more ſucceſsfully endeavoured to make her ſuppreſs the indulgence of her grief, by alarming her fears with the approach of Mr. Morgan. As ſoon as ſhe was a little compoſed, ſhe led her into the garden for air. The night was fine, and the moon ſhone very reſplendent, the beauty of the ſcene, and the freſhneſs of the air a little revived her; and as Mr. Morgan ſtaid out later than they expected, ſhe had time to acquire a ſufficient command over herſelf to receive him with an air of tolerable chearfulneſs.

The new-married pair ſet out early the next morning, and arrived at Mr. Morgan's ſeat the following day. The houſe was large and old, the furniture not much leſs ancient, the ſituation drea-

ry, the roads every where bad, the ſoil a ſtiff clay, wet and dirty, except in the midſt of ſummer; the country round it diſagreeable, and in ſhort, deſtitute of every thing that could afford any ſatisfaction to Mrs. Morgan. Nature no where appears graced with fewer charms. Mrs. Morgan however had vexations ſo ſuperior, that ſhe paid little regard to external circumſtances, and was ſo fully determined to acquit herſelf properly in her new ſphere, that ſhe appeared pleaſed with every thing around her. Hypocriſy, as ſhe obſerved, was now become a virtue, and the only one which ſhe found it difficult to practiſe. They were received on their arrival by a maiden ſiſter of Mr. Morgan's, who till then had kept his houſe, and he intended ſhould ſtill remain in it; for as through the partiality of an aunt, who had bred her up, ſhe was poſſeſſed of a large fortune, her brother, in whom avarice was the ruling paſſion, was very deſirous of keeping in her favour.

Mrs. Suſanna Morgan had lived immaculate to the age of fifty-five. The ſtate of virginity could not be laid to her charge as an offence againſt ſociety, for it had not been voluntary. In her youth ſhe was rather diſtinguiſhed for ſenſibility. Her aunt's known riches gave the niece the reputation of a great fortune, an attraction to which ſhe was indebted for many lovers, who conſtantly took their leave on finding the old lady would not advance any part of the money which ſhe deſigned to bequeath her niece. Miſs Suſanna, extremely ſuſceptible by nature, was favourably diſpoſed to all her admirers, and imagining herſelf ſucceſſively in love with each, lived in a courſe of diſappointments. In reality, the impreſſion was made only on her vanity, and her heart continued unengaged; but ſhe felt ſuch a train of mortifications very ſeverely,

and

and perhaps ſuffered more upon the whole, than if ſhe had been ſtrongly impreſſed with one paſſion. In time the parcimony of her old aunt became generally known, and the young lady then was left free from the tender importunity of lovers, of which nothing elſe could probably have deprived her; for as ſhe never had any natural attractions, ſhe was not ſubject to a decay of charms; at near fifty-three her aunt departed this life, and left her in poſſeſſion of twenty-thouſand pounds, a fortune which ſerved to ſwell her pride, without increaſing her happineſs.

Nature had not originally beſtowed upon her much ſweetneſs of temper, and her frequent diſappointments, each of which ſhe termed being croſſed in love, had completely ſoured it. Every pretty woman was the object of her envy, I might almoſt ſay every married woman. She deſpiſed all that were not as rich as herſelf, and hated every one who was ſuperior or equal to her in fortune. Tormented inwardly with her own ill-nature, ſhe was incapable of any ſatisfaction but what aroſe from teazing others; nothing could diſpel the frown on her brow, except the ſatisfaction ſhe felt when ſhe had the good fortune to give pain to any of her dependants; a horrid grin then diſtorted her features, and her before lifeleſs eyes gliſtened with malice and rancorous joy. She had read juſt enough to make her pedantic, and too little to give her any improving knowledge. Her underſtanding was naturally ſmall, and her ſelf-conceit great. In her perſon ſhe was tall and meagre, her hair black, and her complexion of the darkeſt brown, with an additional ſallowneſs at her temples and round her eyes, which were dark, very large and prominent, and entirely without luſtre; they had but one look, which was that of gloomy ſtupid ill-nature, except, as I have already ſaid, when they were enlivened

by the ſupreme ſatisfaction of having made ſomebody uneaſy, then what before was but diſagreeable became horrible. To complete the deſcription of her face, ſhe had a broad flat noſe, a wide mouth, furniſhed with the worſt ſet of teeth I ever ſaw, and her chin was long and pointed. She had heard primneſs ſo often mentioned as the characteriſtic of an old maid, that to avoid wearing that appearance, ſhe was ſlatternly and dirty to an exceſs; beſides ſhe had great addition of filthineſs, from a load of Spaniſh ſnuff, with which her whole dreſs was covered, as if, by her profuſion in that particular, ſhe thought to compenſate for her general parſimony.

This lady, Mrs. Morgan found in poſſeſſion of her houſe, and was received by her with that air of ſuperiority, to which Mrs. Suſanna thought herſelf intitled by her age and fortune. Mrs. Morgan's charms, though drooping like a blighted flower, excited much envy in Suſanna's breaſt, and ſhe ſoon congratulated her, on her extraordinary happineſs in having captivated a gentleman of ſo large a fortune, when her own was at preſent ſo very ſmall.

At firſt ſhe commended her, for not being elated with ſo great an acquiſition, but in a little time taxed her with ungrateful inſenſibility to ſo prodigious a bleſſing. She continually criticized her œconomy, accuſing her of indolence; repreſenting, how 'ſhe uſed every morning to rouſe the ſervants 'from their idleneſs, by giving each ſuch a ſcold, 'as quickened their diligence for the whole day; 'nor could a family be well managed by any one 'who omitted this neceſſary duty.' Mrs. Morgan's deſire that her ſervants ſhould enjoy the comforts of plenty, and when ſick, receive the indulgence which that condition requires, brought her continual admonitions againſt extravagance, wherein Mr. Morgan readily joined; for his avarice was ſo great,

great, that he repined at the moſt neceſſary expences.

His temper was a mixture of paſſion and peviſhneſs, two things that ſeldom go together; but he would fret himſelf into a paſſion, and then through wearineſs of ſpirits cool into fretfulneſs, till he was ſufficiently recovered to riſe again into rage. This was the common courſe of his temper, which afforded variety, but no relief.

Senſible that his wife married him without affection, he ſeemed to think it impoſſible ever to gain her love, and therefore ſpared himſelf all fruitleſs endeavours. He was indeed fond of her perſon; he admired her beauty, but deſpiſed her underſtanding, which in truth was unavoidable; for his ideas and converſation were ſo low and ſordid, that he was not qualified to diſtinguiſh the charms of her elegant mind. Thoſe who know Mrs. Morgan beſt, are convinced that ſhe ſuffered leſs uneaſineſs from his ill-humour, brutal as it was, than from his nauſeous fondneſs. But the account I give of him, I have received from others; Mrs. Morgan never mentions his name, if it can poſſibly be avoided; and when ſhe does, it is always with reſpect. In this ſituation, a victim to the ill-humour both of her huſband and his ſiſter; we will leave Mrs. Morgan, and return to that friend whoſe letters were her only conſolation.

Miſs Mancel's perſon was ſo uncommonly fine, that ſhe could not be long ſettled in the country without attracting general notice. Though the lower rank of people may be leſs refined in their ideas, yet her beauty was ſo very ſtriking, that it did not eſcape their admiration, and *the handſome lady*, as they called her, became the general ſubject of diſcourſe. As church was the only place where ſhe was expoſed to public view, ſhe had from the

firſt endeavoured to elude obſervation, by mingling in the croud, and ſitting in the moſt obſcure ſeat; but when fame had awakened the curioſity of thoſe of higher rank, ſhe was eaſily diſtinguiſhed, and in a ſhort time many inhabitants of the neighbouring pariſhes came to that church to ſee her. She more than anſwered every expectation; for ſuch perfection of beauty ſcarcely ever came out of the hands of nature. Many ladies in the neighbourhood introduced themſelves to her, and found her behaviour as enchanting as her perſon. She could not be inſenſible of the approbation which every eye ſignificantly expreſſed; but ſhe was abaſhed, and in ſome degree more mortified than delighted by it. She well remembered what Mr. d'Avora had ſaid to her on that ſubject, and ſaw that in her ſituation beauty was a diſadvantage. He often repeated the ſame thing to her in letters, (for ſhe and Miſs Melvyn keeping up a conſtant correſpondance with him, the latter had acquainted him with the general admiration paid to Louiſa) and told her, that he feared the plan they had formed for her future way of life, was at a ſtill greater diſtance than they had hoped, ſince her beauty was the great obſtacle to its being put in execution.

The ladies of the beſt faſhion in the neighbourhood begged leave to viſit her; and though ſhe more than ever wiſhed to have her time uninterrupted, ſince as ſhe had no proſpect of any other means of ſupport, it was neceſſary, by ſuch little additions as ſhe could make to her ſmall fund, to prevent its quick diminution, yet ſhe could not decline the civilities ſo obligingly offered her, but avoided all intimacy with any of them as foreign to her plan, and hurtful to her intereſt. Thus was ſhe circumſtanced in reſpect to the neighbourhood when Miſs Melvyn married.

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As after this event Louiſa was determined to change her habitation; ſhe began to enquire for ſome family, where ſhe might be accommodated in the ſame manner, as in that where ſhe was then fixed. Among the perſons who had taken moſt notice of her was Lady Lambton, a perſon of admirable underſtanding, polite, generous and good-natured; who had no fault, but a conſiderable ſhare of pride. She piqued herſelf upon the opulence of her family, and a diſtinguiſhed birth, but her good ſenſe, and many virtues, ſo qualified this one blemiſh, that it did not prevent her being a very amiable woman.

When ſhe found Miſs Mancel deſigned to change her abode, ſhe told her, that at an honeſt farmer's near her houſe, ſhe might be accommodated, but that as ſome little alterations would be requiſite to make the place fit for her, ſhe, in the moſt obliging manner, deſired her company till the apartment was ready; which would give her opportunity to ſee that ſuch things were done to it, as would be moſt convenient and agreeable. Lady Lambton inſiſted ſo ſtrongly on Miſs Mancel's accepting this invitation, that ſhe could not without incivility refuſe it; and, as after the loſs of her friend, all places were alike to her, ſhe had no reaſon to decline ſo obliging an offer.

No great preparations were required for this removal of abode. Lady Lambton came herſelf to fetch Miſs Mancel home. The old lady was charmed with her new gueſt; many of whoſe accompliſhments were unknown to her till ſhe came under the ſame roof, and would not ſuffer any preparations to be made for another lodging, but inſiſted on her continuing much longer with her.

Lady Lambton behaved in ſo very obliging a manner, and Louiſa found ſo much pleaſure and improvement in the converſation of a woman, whoſe admirable underſtanding and thorough knowledge of the world are ſeldom to be parallelled, that ſhe could not be more agreeably placed; as ſhe dared not go even into Mrs. Morgan's neighbourhood, for fear of giving additional uneaſineſs to one, whoſe ſituation ſhe plainly perceived was by no means happy; for though Mrs. Morgan ſuppreſſed all complaints, never hinted at the treatment ſhe received, and endeavoured to repreſent her way of life in the beſt colours, to ſave her friend the ſympathetic pangs of heart, which ſhe knew ſhe would feel for her ſufferings; yet the alteration in her ſtile, the melancholy turn of mind, which in ſpight of all her care, was viſible in her letters, could not eſcape the obſervation of one whoſe natural diſcernment was quickened by affection.

The full perſuaſion of Mrs. Morgan's unhappineſs, and that anxious ſollicitude which aroſe from her ignorance as to the degree of her wretchedneſs, was a ſource of continual grief to her mind, which Lady Lambton's ſincere friendſhip could ſcarcely alleviate. But ſhe knew too well, how few people can bear the unhappy, to ſuffer her uneaſineſs to appear. She ſtifled therefore every expreſſion of that kind; for if Lady Lambton had generouſly ſympathized in her affliction, it would have given her pain to know ſhe had occaſioned that lady's feeling any; and if ſhe had been inſenſible to it, complaints would not fail to diſguſt her.

Lady Lambton was fond of muſic, and not void of taſte for painting; Miſs Mancel's excellence in theſe arts, therefore afforded her the higheſt entertainment. Her ladyſhip was likewiſe a miſtreſs of languages, and was pleaſed to find Louiſa equally acquainted

acquainted with them. In this houſe Miſs Mancel had paſſed above a twelve month, when Sir Edward Lambton returned from his travels, in which he had ſpent four years. As ſoon as he arrived in the kingdom he came to wait on Lady Lambton, his grandmother; who was likewiſe his guardian, his father and mother being both dead. She had longed with impatience for his return, but thought herſelf well repaid for his abſence by the great improvement which was very viſible both in his manner and perſon.

Sir Edward was extremely handſome, his perſon fine and graceful, his converſation lively and entertaining, politeneſs adding charms to an excellent underſtanding. His behaviour, I have been told, was particularly engaging, his temper amiable, though ſomewhat too warm, and he had all his grandmother's generoſity, without any of her pride.

It would have been ſtrange if a man of three and twenty years old (for that was Sir Edward's age) had not been much charmed with ſo lovely a woman as Miſs Mancel. That he was ſo, ſoon became viſible, but ſhe, as well as his grandmother, for ſome time imagined the attentions he paid her were only the natural reſult of the gallantry uſual at his age, and improved into a ſofter addreſs, by a manner acquired in travelling through countries where gallantry is publicly profeſſed. Lady Lambton however, knowing her own diſcernment, expreſſed ſome fears to Louiſa, leſt her grandſon ſhould become ſeriouſly in love with her, in order to diſcover by her countenance, whether there was really any ground for her apprehenſions, which ſhe founded on the impoſſibility of his marrying a woman of ſmall fortune, without reducing himſelf to the greateſt inconvenience, as his eſtate was extremely incumbered, and he was by an intail deprived

prived of the liberty of ſelling any part of it to diſcharge the debt. She was too polite to mention her chief objection to Miſs Mancel, which was in reality the obſcurity of her birth.

Louiſa, who ſincerely believed Sir Edward had no real paſſion for her, anſwered with a frankneſs which entirely convinced Lady Lambton that ſhe had received no ſerious addreſs from him; but Louiſa, who ſaw herſelf now in the ſituation which Mr. d'Avora had warned her againſt, begged permiſſion to leave Lady Lambton's, to prevent her ladyſhip's being under any uneaſineſs, and to avoid all danger of Sir Edward's receiving any ſtrong impreſſion in her favour.

Lady Lambton was unwilling to part with her amiable companion; and beſides, thought if her grandſon was really enamoured, ſhe ſhould increaſe the danger rather than leſſen it, by not keeping Louiſa under her eye; ſhe therefore told her ſhe could not conſent to loſe her company, and was certain ſhe might depend on her honour. Louiſa thanked her for her good opinion, and aſſured her ſhe would never do any thing to forfeit it.

Sir Edward was more captivated than either of the ladies imagined, and every day increaſed his paſſion. Louiſa's beauty, her converſation, and accompliſhments were irreſiſtible; but as he knew the great occaſion he had to marry a woman of fortune, he long endeavoured to combat his inclinations. He might have conceived hopes of obtaining any other woman in her circumſtances on eaſier terms; but there was ſuch dignity and virtue ſhone forth in her, and he was ſo truly in love, that ſuch a thought never entered his imagination. He reverenced and reſpected her like a divinity, but hoped that prudence might enable him to conquer his paſſion, at the ſame time that it had not force

enough

enough to determine him to fly her preſence, the only poſſible means of leſſening the impreſſion which every hour engraved more deeply on his heart, by bringing ſome new attractions to his view. He little conſidered, that the man who has not power to fly from temptation, will never be able to reſiſt it by ſtanding his ground.

Louiſa was not long before ſhe grew ſenſible, that what ſhe had offered to Lady Lambton for the eaſe of her ladyſhip's mind, was adviſable to ſecure the peace of her own. Sir Edward's merit, his ſincere reſpect for her, which certainly is the moſt powerful charm to a woman of delicacy, could ſcarcely fail to make an impreſſion on a heart ſo tender, ſo generous as her's. She kept ſo ſtrict a watch over herſelf, that ſhe ſoon perceived her ſenſibility, and endeavoured to prevail on Lady Lambton to part with her; but the old lady imagining it was only in order to quiet her apprehenſions, would not conſent; and the difficulty in finding a place where ſhe could be properly received, ſtrongly diſcouraged her from inſiſting on it. If ſhe continued in the neighbourhood, her purpoſe would not be anſwered; for ſhe could not avoid Sir Edward's viſits; her only friend was denied the liberty of protecting her, and to go into a place where ſhe was unknown, would ſubject a young woman of her age and beauty to a thouſand dangers.

Theſe difficulties detained her, though unwillingly, at Lady Lambton's for above half a year after Sir Edward's return; who, at length, unable to confine in ſilence a paſſion which had long been obvious to every obſerver, took an opportunity, when alone with Louiſa, to declare his attachment in the moſt affecting manner. She received it not with ſurprize, but with real ſorrow. She had no tincture of coquettry in her compoſition; but if ſhe had

had been capable of it, her affections were too deeply engaged to have ſuffered her to retain it. Her ſenſibility was never ſo ſtrongly awakened; all her endeavours to reſtrain it were no longer of force, her heart returned his paſſion, and would have conquered every thing but her juſtice and her honour; theſe were deeply engaged to Lady Lambton; and ſhe would have deteſted herſelf, if ſhe could have entertained a thought of making that lady's goodneſs to her, the occaſion of the greateſt vexation ſhe could receive. She therefore never heſitated on the part ſhe ſhould act on this trying occaſion; but the victories which honour gains over the tender affections, are not to be obtained without the ſevereſt pangs. Thus tormented by the ſtruggles between duty and affection, ſhe was not immediately capable of giving him an anſwer; but finding that her difficulties were increaſing, by his repeated profeſſions, and animated by the neceſſity of ſilencing a love, which too ſucceſsfully ſollicited a return of affection, ſhe aſſumed a ſufficient command over herſelf to conceal her ſentiments, and with averted eyes, leſt her heart ſhould through them contradict her words, ſhe told him, 'he 'diſtreſſed her to the greateſt degree; that the 'reſpect ſhe had for him on account of his own 'merit, and not leſs for the relation he bore to 'Lady Lambton, made her extremely concerned 'that he ſhould have conceived a paſſion for her, 'which it was not in her power to return; nor 'could ſhe liſten to it in juſtice to Lady Lambton, 'to whom ſhe was bound in all the ties of grati-'tude; neither ſhould any thing ever prevail with her 'to do any thing prejudicial to the intereſts of a 'family into which ſhe had been ſo kindly re-'ceived.'

Sir

Sir Edward was too much in love to acquieſce in ſo nice a point of honour; but Louiſa would not wait to hear arguments which it was ſo painful to her to refute, and retired into her own chamber, to lament in ſecret her unhappy fate in being obliged to reject the addreſſes of a man, whoſe affections, were ſhe at liberty, ſhe would think no ſacrifice too great to obtain.

Miſs Mancel endeavoured as much as poſſible to avoid giving Sir Edward any opportunity of renewing his addreſſes; but his vigilance found the means of ſeeing her alone more than once, when he warmly urged the partiality of her behaviour, repreſenting 'how much more his happineſs was concerned in 'the ſucceſs of a paſſion which poſſeſſed his whole 'ſoul, than his grandmother's could be in diſappointing it. She, he obſerved, was actuated 'only by pride, he by the ſincereſt love that ever 'took place in a human heart. In accepting his 'addreſſes Louiſa could only mortify Lady Lambton; in rejecting them, ſhe muſt render him miſerable. Which, he aſked, had the beſt title to 'her regard, the woman who could ungenerouſly 'and injudiciouſly ſet a higher value on riches and 'birth than on her very ſuperior excellencies, or 'the man who would gladly ſacrifice fortune, and 'every other enjoyment the world could afford, to 'the poſſeſſion of her; of her who alone could 'render life deſirable to him?' By theſe, and many other arguments, and what was more prevalent than all the arguments that could be deduced from reaſon, by the tendereſt intreaties that the moſt ardent paſſion could dictate, Sir Edward endeavoured to perſuade Louiſa to conſent to marry him, but all proved unavailing. She ſometimes thought what he ſaid was juſt, but aware of her partiality, ſhe could not believe herſelf an unprejudiced

diced judge, and feared that ſhe might miſtake the ſophiſtry of love, for the voice of reaſon. She was ſure, while honour, truth, and gratitude, pleaded againſt inclination they muſt be in the right, though their remonſtrances were huſhed into a whiſper by the louder ſollicitations of paſſion. Convinced that ſhe could not be to blame, while ſhe acted in contradiction to her ſecret choice, ſince the ſincerity of her intentions were thereby plainly, though painfully evinced, ſhe perſiſted in refuſing to become Sir Edward's wife, and told him, that 'if he did 'not diſcontinue his addreſſes, he would force her to 'leave the houſe, and retire to any place that would 'afford her a quiet refuge from his importunity.'

A hint of this ſort was ſufficient to drive Sir Edward almoſt to diſtraction, and Louiſa dared not purſue the ſubject. When he found ſhe could not be induced to conſent to an immediate marriage, he endeavoured to obtain a promiſe of her hand after Lady Lambton's deceaſe; though to a man of his impatient and ſtrong paſſions ſuch a delay was worſe than death; but Miſs Mancel told him, 'by 'ſuch an engagement ſhe ſhould be guilty of a 'mean evaſion, and that ſhe ſhould think it as great 'a breach of honour as marrying him directly.'

The deſpair to which Louiſa's conduct reduced Sir Edward, whoſe love ſeemed to increaſe with the abatement of his hopes, was very viſible to his grandmother, but her pride was invincible; neither her affection for him, nor her great eſteem for Miſs Mancel's merit, could conquer her averſion to their union. She ſaw them both unhappy, but was convinced the pangs they felt would not be of very long continuance, truſting to the uſual inconſtancy of young perſons, while the inconveniencies attending an incumbered fortune, and the diſgrace which ſhe imagined muſt be the conſequence

quence of Sir Edward's marrying a woman of obſcure birth, would be permanent, and influence the whole courſe of his life.

Louiſa, unable to ſupport ſo hard a conflict, continually reſiſting both her lover, and her love, was determined to ſeek ſome relief from abſence. She wrote Mr. d'Avora a faithful account of all the difficulties of her ſituation, and intreated him to receive her into his houſe, till he could find ſome proper place wherein to fix her abode.

This worthy friend approved her conduct, while he grieved for her diſtreſs; his honeſt heart felt a ſecret indignation againſt Lady Lambton, who could, by falſe pride, be blinded to the honour which he thought ſuch a woman as Miſs Mancel muſt reflect on any family into which ſhe entered. He wrote that young lady word, that 'ſhe might 'be aſſured of the beſt reception his houſe could 'afford, and every ſervice that it was in his power 'to render her; deſiring that ſhe would let him 'know when ſhe propoſed ſetting out, that he 'might meet her on the road, not thinking it pro-'per ſhe ſhould travel alone.'

This letter gave Miſs Mancel much ſatisfaction; ſhe was now ſecure of an aſylum; but the great difficulty ſtill remained, ſhe knew not how to get away from Lady Lambton's in a proper manner; for to go clandeſtinely was not ſuitable to her character, and might bring it into ſuſpicion. In this dilemma ſhe thought it beſt to apply to that lady, and with her uſual frankneſs told her, (what had not eſcaped her diſcernment) the affection Sir Edward had conceived for her, and the return her own heart made to it; only ſuppreſſing his ſolicitations, as her ladyſhip might be offended with his proceeding ſo far without her conſent. She repreſented 'the imprudence of her continuing in the houſe with

'with Sir Edward, whereby both his paſſion and 'her own muſt be increaſed; and yet ſhe was at 'a loſs how to depart privately, but was convinced 'it could not be affected with his knowledge, with-'out ſuch an eclat as muſt be very diſagreeable to 'them all; nor could ſhe anſwer for her own re-'ſolution, when put to ſo ſevere a trial; as ſhe 'ſhould have more than her full meaſure of affic-'tion in going from thence, without being witneſs 'to its effect on him.'

One ſhould have imagined that the generoſity of Miſs Mancel's conduct, might have influenced Lady Lambton in her favour; but though it increaſed her eſteem, it did not alter her reſolution. With inexcuſable inſenſibility ſhe concerted meaſures with her, and engaged to procure Sir Edward's abſence for a ſhort time. Some very neceſſary buſineſs indeed demanded his preſence in a neighbouring county, where the greateſt part of his eſtate lay, but he had not been able to prevail on himſelf to leave Louiſa; too much enamoured to think any pecuniary advantage could compenſate for the loſs of her company. But as it was natural that an old grandmother ſhould ſee the matter in another light; her preſſing him to go and ſettle his affairs, gave him no cauſe to ſuſpect any latent meaning, and was too reaſonable to be any longer oppoſed.

Though Sir Edward was reſolved on ſo quick a diſpatch of buſineſs, as promiſed him a ſpeedy return, yet any ſeparation from Miſs Mancel, however ſhort, appeared a ſevere misfortune. The evening before the day of his departure, he contrived to ſee her alone, and renewed his importunities with redoubled ardour, but with no better ſucceſs than before. He lamented the neceſſity he was under of leaving her, though but for a little

time,

time, with an agony of mind better ſuited to an eternal ſeparation. She, who ſaw it in that light, was overcome with the tender diſtreſs which a perſon muſt feel at taking a final leave of one who is extremely dear to her. Her own grief was more than ſhe could have concealed; but when ſhe anticipated in her thoughts, what he would ſuffer when he knew he had loſt her for ever, and judged from the pain he felt on the approach of what he thought ſo ſhort an abſence; how very great his diſtreſs would be, ſhe was unable to ſupport the ſcene with her uſual ſteadineſs. Tears inſenſibly ſtole down her face, and beſtowed on it ſtill greater charms than it had ever yet worn, by giving her an air of tenderneſs, which led him to hope that ſhe did not behold his paſſion with indifference. This thought afforded him a conſolation which he had never before received; and though it increaſed his love, yet it abated his diſtreſs, and rendered him more able to leave her, ſince he flattered himſelf ſhe would with pleaſure ſee him return, which he was now more than ever reſolved to do as ſpeedily as poſſible.

The day of his departure ſhe ſpent chiefly in her own room, to conceal, as far as ſhe was able, a weakneſs ſhe was aſhamed of, but could not conquer. She had written the day before to inform Mr. d'Avora, that ſhe ſhould ſet out for London four days after her letter. Accordingly at the time appointed, after having agreed with Lady Lambton, that Sir Edward muſt be kept ignorant of the place to which ſhe was gone, ſhe ſet out with that lady, who carried her in her coach twelve miles of the way, and then delivered her to Mr. d'Avora, who was come thither to receive her. Lady Lambton could not part with her amiable companion without regret, and expreſſed her true ſenſe of her merit

rit in ſuch ſtrong terms to Mr. d'Avora, who could not forgive that pride which occaſioned ſo much pain both to Louiſa and Sir Edward, that he told her in plain terms, how very happy, and how much honoured any man muſt be, who had her for his wife. Perhaps Lady Lambton would have ſubſcribed to his opinion, had any one but her grandſon been concerned; but the point was too tender, and it was no ſmall command over herſelf, that prevented her giving the good old man a hint that ſhe thought him impertinent.

Our travellers arrived in town the next day, after a melancholy journey, for even the company of a friend ſhe ſo much loved and eſteemed, could not reſtore Miſs Mancel's natural vivacity, though in compaſſion to the good old man, who ſympathiſed tenderly in her diſtreſs, ſhe endeavoured to the utmoſt of her power, to conceal how very deeply ſhe was afflicted. It was ſome little time before her ſpirits were ſufficiently compoſed to form any ſcheme for her future life, nor were they benefitted by a letter from Lady Lambton, which acquainted her that Sir Edward, at his return, finding ſhe had left the place, that his grandmother had conſented to her departure, and refuſed to tell him where ſhe was gone, was for ſome days frantic with rage and grief, and had juſt then left Lady Lampton, with a determination to ſerve as volunteer in the army in Germany, in hopes, he ſaid, to find there a releaſe from his afflictions, which nothing but the hand of death could beſtow.

The old lady was much ſhocked at this event, but hoped a little time would reſtore his reaſon, and enable him to bear his diſappointment with patience. 'There was room to believe, ſhe ſaid, that 'the reſt of the campaign would paſs over without

'a battle

'a battle, and if ſo the change of ſcene might 'abate his paſſion.'

Louiſa's heart was too tenderly engaged to reaſon ſo philoſophically, ſhe was almoſt diſtracted with her fears, and was often inclined to blame her own ſcruples, that had driven ſo worthy a man to ſuch extremities. All Mr. d'Avora could urge to reconcile her to herſelf, and to calm her apprehenſions for Sir Edward, were ſcarcely ſufficient to reſtore her to any eaſe of mind; but at length he brought her to ſubmit patiently to her fate, and to ſupport her preſent trial with conſtancy.

They were ſtill undetermined as to her future eſtabliſhment, when Mr. d'Avora one day met an old acquaintance and countryman in the ſtreet. As this perſon had many years before returned to his native country, Mr. d'Avora inquired what had again brought him into England? His friend replied, that he was come in quality of factotum to a widow lady of fortune. In the courſe of their converſation he aſked Mr. d'Avora, if he could recommend a waiting woman to his lady, her's having died on the road. The character this man gave of his miſtreſs inclined Mr. d'Avora to mention the place to Miſs Mancel, who readily agreed, that he ſhould endeavour to obtain it for her.

Mr. d'Avora had engaged the man to call on him the next day, by telling him he believed he might be able to recommend a moſt valuable young perſon to his lady. He was punctual to his appointment, and conducted Mr. d'Avora and Louiſa to Mrs. Thornby's, that was the name of the lady in queſtion.

Miſs Mancel was dreſſed with care, but of a very different ſort from what is uſually aimed at; all her endeavours had been to conceal her youth and beauty as much as poſſible under great gravity

of dreſs, and to give her all the diſadvantages conſiſtent with neatneſs and cleanlineſs. But ſuch art was too thin a veil to hide her charms. Mrs. Thornby was immediately ſtruck with her beauty, and made ſome ſcruple of taking a young perſon into her ſervice, whom ſhe ſhould look upon as a great charge, and ſhe feared her maid might require more attention from her, than ſhe ſhould think neceſſary for any ſervant to pay to herſelf. Mr. d'Avora repreſented to her, 'how cruel it was that 'beauty, which was looked upon as one of the 'moſt precious gifts of nature, ſhould diſqualify 'a young woman for obtaining a neceſſary proviſion. That this young perſon's prudence was 'ſo irreproachable, as ſufficiently ſecured her from 'any diſadvantages, which might naturally be 'feared from it. But ſtill he allowed, her perſon 'would juſtly deter a married woman from receiving her, and might make a cautious mother 'avoid it, ſince her good conduct would rather add 'to, than diminiſh her attractions, therefore it was 'only with a ſingle lady ſhe could hope to be placed; 'and he was well convinced, that ſuch an one 'would have reaſon to think herſelf happy, in ſo 'accompliſhed a ſervant; ſince her mind was ſtill 'more amiable than her perſon.'

Mrs. Thornby allowed what he ſaid to be reaſona- and was ſo charmed with Louiſa's appearance, that ſhe aſſured him ſhe would receive her with pleaſure. She was in haſte for a ſervant, and Miſs Mancel had no reaſon to delay her attendance, therefore it was agreed ſhe ſhould enter into her place the next day.

When Lady Lambton took leave of Louiſa, ſhe would have forced her to receive a very handſome preſent; Louiſa had accepted many while ſhe lived with her ladyſhip, but at this time ſhe ſaid, 'it 'would

'would look like receiving a compenſation for the 'loſs of Sir Edward; and as ſhe choſe to ſacrifice 'both her inclinations and happineſs to her regard 'for Lady Lambton, ſhe could not be induced to 'accept any thing that looked like a reward for an 'action, which if ſhe had not thought it her duty, 'nothing could have prevailed with her to per-'form.' The tendereſt affections of her heart were too much concerned in what ſhe had done, to leave her the power of feeling any apprehenſions of poverty; all the evils that attend it then appeared to her ſo entirely external, that ſhe beheld them with the calm philoſophy of a ſtoic, and not from a very contrary motive; the inſenſibility of each aroſe from a ruling paſſion; the ſtoic's from pride, her's from love. But though ſhe feared not poverty, ſhe ſaw it was adviſable to fix upon ſome eſtabliſhment, as ſoon as it could be obtained; and therefore received great ſatisfaction from being aſſured of Mrs. Thornby's acceptance of her ſervices. Mr. d'Avora was not without hopes, that if Sir Edward continued conſtant till Lady Lambton's death, Louiſa might then, without any breach of honour or gratitude, marry him; though to have engaged herſelf to do ſo, would, as ſhe obſerved, have been ſcarcely leſs inexcuſable than an immediate conſent; therefore he adviſed her to aſſume another name, as Sir Edward might not chooſe, after ſhe was his wife, to have it known that ſhe had been reduced to ſervitude.

Louiſa was accordingly received at Mrs. Thornby's by the name of Menil. Her good ſenſe and aſſiduity enabled her to acquit herſelf ſo well in her new place, as greatly delighted her miſtreſs; and though ſhe concealed the greateſt part of her accompliſhments, ſenſible they could be of no aſſiſtance, and might on the contrary raiſe a prejudice

againſt her; yet her behaviour and converſation ſo plainly indicated a ſuperior education, that before ſhe had been there a week, Mrs. Thornby told her, ſhe was certain ſhe had not been born for the ſtation ſhe was then in, and begged a particular account of her whole life.

Louiſa fearing that a compliance would render her leſs agreeable to her miſtreſs, who already treated her with a reſpect, which ſeemed more than was due to her ſituation, and often appeared uneaſy at ſeeing her perform the neceſſary duties of her place; intreated to be ſpared a taſk, which, ſhe ſaid, was attended with ſome circumſtances ſo melancholy, as greatly affected her ſpirits on a particular recollection.

Mrs. Thornby's curioſity was not abated by this inſinuation, and ſhe repeated her requeſt in a manner ſo importunate, and at the ſame time ſo kind, that Louiſa could no longer, without manifeſt diſreſpect, decline it.

She began then by acquainting her, that ſhe went by a borrowed name; but had proceeded no farther in her narration, than to tell her that her real name was Mancel, and that ſhe had been left to the care of an aunt, in her earlieſt infancy, by parents who were obliged, for reaſons ſhe could never learn, to leave their country, when Mrs. Thornby exclaimed, My child! my child! and ſinking on her knees, with eyes and hands lifted up towards heaven, poured forth a moſt ardent thankſgiving, with an extacy of mind not to be deſcribed. Her firſt ſenſation was that of gratitude to the Almighty Power, who had reſerved ſo great a bleſſing for her; maternal tenderneſs alone gave riſe to the ſucceeding emotions of her heart; ſhe threw her arms round Louiſa, who on ſeeing her fall on her knees, and not comprehending the meaning

of

of her action ran to her; but ſtruck with aſtoniſhment and reverence at the awful piety in her countenance and addreſs, bent ſilent and motionleſs over her. Mrs Thornby leaning her head on Louiſa's boſom, burſt into ſuch a flood of tears, and was ſo oppreſſed with joy, that the power of ſpeech totally failed her. Louiſa raiſed her from the ground, crying, 'Dear madam, what can all this mean; 'What does this extreme agitation of your mind give 'me room to hope?'

'Every thing, my child! my angel! that a fond 'parent can beſtow, replied Mrs. Thornby. I 'am that mother, that was obliged to leave thee to 'another's care; and has Heaven preſerved my 'daughter, and reſtored her to me ſo lovely, ſo 'amiable! Gracious Providence! Merciful beyond 'hope! Teach me to thank thee as I ought for this 'laſt inſtance of thy goodneſs!' And then her whole ſoul ſeemed again poured forth in grateful adoration.

Louiſa could ſcarcely believe this event was real; thus unexpectedly to meet with a parent, whom ſhe ſuppoſed loſt to her for ever, almoſt ſtunned her; her thoughts were ſo engroſſed by the raptures of her joyful mother, that ſhe did not feel half her good fortune; and the delight ſhe received in ſeeing her mother's happineſs, robbed her of every other ſenſation.

It was ſome hours before Mrs. Thornby's mind was ſufficiently compoſed to enter into any connected converſation. From broken ſentences Miſs Mancel learnt, that 'her father and mother, by 'the complicated diſtreſs of ruined fortune, and 'the too fatal ſucceſs of a duel, in which Mr. 'Mancel was unwillingly engaged, had been 'obliged to abſent themſelves from England. They 'went to one of the American colonies, in hopes

'of finding means to improve their circumſtances, 'leaving the young Louiſa then in her cradle, with 'a ſiſter of Mr. Mancel's, who readily undertook 'the care of her. They were ſcarcely arrived in 'America, when Mr. Mancel was ſeized with a 'fever, of which he ſoon died, and with him all 'their hopes. Mrs. Mancel was left entirely de-'ſtitute, at a loſs how to hazard the tedious paſ-'ſage home, without the protection of a huſband, 'and with hardly a ſufficient ſum remaining to diſ-'charge the expences of it.

'Her melancholy ſituation engaged ſome of the 'inhabitants of the place to offer her all neceſſary 'accommodations, till ſhe could find a proper op-'portunity of returning to England. During this 'time, Mr. Thornby, a gentleman who had ac-'quired a fortune there, ſaw her, and was ſo well 'pleaſed with her perſon and conduct, that he very 'warmly ſollicited her to marry him. Every perſon 'ſpoke in his favour, and urged her to conſent; her 'poverty was no faint adviſer, and with general 'approbation, at the concluſion of the firſt year of 'her widowhood, ſhe became his wife.

'His affairs ſoon called him into a more inland 'part of the country, to which ſhe attributed her 'never having heard from her ſiſter, to whom ſhe 'wrote an account of her huſband's death; but 'by what Miſs Mancel told her ſhe imagined her 'letter had not been received.

'Mr. and Mrs Thornby continued in the ſame 'place, till about two years before her arrival in 'England; but his health growing extremely bad, 'he was adviſed by his phyſicians to return to 'Europe. He wiſhed to re-viſit his native country, 'but was perſuaded, for the re-eſtabliſhment of his 'conſtitution, to ſpend ſome time in Italy. The climate

'climate at firſt ſeemed to relieve him, but his 'complaints returning with greater violence, he died 'in the latter part of the ſecond year of his abode 'there.

'His eſtate in the Indies he bequeathed to a 'nephew, who lived upon the ſpot; but the money 'he had ſent before him into England, which 'amounted to about forty thouſand pounds, he left 'to his widow. He had deſired to be interred at 'Florence, where he died. As ſoon as the funeral was over, and ſome other neceſſary affairs ſettled, Mrs. Thornby ſet out for England, where 'ſhe no ſooner arrived than ſhe employed intelligent perſons to find out her ſiſter-in-law and 'daughter, but had not received any account from 'them, when her daughter was reſtored to her as 'the free gift of providence.'

Mrs. Thornby was now more deſirous than ever, to hear each minute particular that had befallen her Louiſa; but Louiſa begged that before ſhe obeyed her orders, ſhe might have permiſſion to communicate the happy event to Mr. d'Avora, whoſe joy ſhe knew would be nearly equal to her own. A meſſenger was diſpatched for this purpoſe, and then ſhe related circumſtantially all the incidents in her ſhort life, except her partial regard to Sir Edward Lambton, which filial awe induced her to ſuppreſs.

Mrs. Thornby grew every day more delighted with her daughter, as her acquired accompliſhments, and natural excellencies, became more conſpicuous on longer acquaintance. Her maternal love ſeemed to glow with greater warmth for having been ſo long ſtifled, and Louiſa found ſuch delight in the tender affection of a mother, that ſhe was ſcarcely ſenſible of the agreeable change in her ſituation, which was now in every circumſtance

the moſt deſirable. All that fortune could give, ſhe had it in her power to enjoy, and that eſteem which money cannot purchaſe, her own merit ſecured her, beſides all the gratification a young woman can receive from general admiration. But ſtill Louiſa was not happy, her fears for Sir Edward's life, while in ſo dangerous a ſituation, would not ſuffer her mind to be at peace. She might hope every thing from her mother's indulgence, but had not courage to confeſs her weakneſs, nor to intimate a wiſh, which might occaſion her ſeparation from a parent, whoſe joy in their re-union ſtill roſe to rapture. Chance, that deity, which though blind, is often a powerful friend, did what ſhe could not prevail on herſelf to do.

One morning the news paper of the day being brought in, Mrs. Thornby taking it up, read to her daughter a paragraph, which contained an account of a battle in Germany, wherein many of the Engliſh were ſaid to be ſlain, but few of their names ſpecified. Louiſa immediately turned pale, her work dropped out of her hand, and an univerſal trembling ſeized her. Mrs. Thornby was too attentive not to obſerve her daughter's diſtreſs, and ſo kindly inquired the reaſon, that Louiſa ventured to tell her for whom ſhe was ſo much intereſted; and gave an exact account of Sir Edward's addreſs to her, her behaviour upon it, and the great regard ſhe had for him.

Mrs. Thornby affectionately chid her for having till then concealed a circumſtance whereon ſo much of her happineſs depended, and offered to write to Lady Lambton immediately, and acquaint her, that if want of fortune was her only objection to Miſs Mancel, it no longer ſubſiſted, for that ſhe was ready to anſwer any demands of that ſort, which her ladyſhip ſhould chuſe to make, as ſhe thought

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ſhe ſhould no way ſo well ſecure her daughter's happineſs, as by uniting her with a gentleman of Sir Edward's amiable character, and whoſe affection for her had ſo evidently appeared.

Louiſa could not reject an offer which might reſcue Sir Edward from the dangers that threatened him, and with pleaſure thought of rewarding ſo generous and ſo ſincere a paſſion. Perhaps ſhe found ſome gratification, in ſhewing that gratitude alone dictated her refuſal. The letter was immediately diſpatched, and received with great pleaſure by lady Lambton, whoſe eſteem for Miſs Mancel, would have conquered any thing but her pride. She accepted the propoſal in the politeſt manner, and that Sir Edward might be acquainted with his happineſs as ſoon as poſſible, diſpatched her ſteward into Germany, ordering him to travel with the utmoſt expedition, and gave him Mrs. Thornby's letter, with one from herſelf, containing an account of the great change in Louiſa's fortune.

The ſervant obeyed the directions given him, and performed the journey in as ſhort a time as poſſible; but as he entered the camp, he met Sir Edward indeed, but not as a future bridegroom. He was borne on mens ſhoulders, pale and almoſt breathleſs, juſt returned from an attack, whereby his too great raſhneſs, he had received a mortal wound. He followed him with an aching heart to his tent, where Sir Edward recovering his ſenſes, knew him, and aſked, 'What brought him there ſo opportunely, 'to cloſe his eyes, and pay the laſt duties, to one of 'whoſe infancy he had been ſo careful?' for this ſervant lived in the family when Sir Edward was born, and loved him almoſt with paternal fondneſs, which occaſioned his deſire of being himſelf the meſſenger of ſuch joyful news.

The poor man was ſcarcely able to anſwer a queſtion expreſſed in ſuch melancholy terms, and was doubtful whether he ought to acquaint him with a circumſtance, which might only increaſe his regret at loſing a life, which would have been bleſſed to his utmoſt wiſh, but incapable in that ſtate of mind of inventing any plauſible reaſon, he told him the truth, and gave him the two letters.

The pleaſure Sir Edward received at the account of Louiſa's good fortune, and the ſtill greater joy he felt at ſo evident a proof of her regard for him, made him for a time forget his pains, and flattered the good old ſteward with hopes, that his caſe was not ſo deſperate as the ſurgeons repreſented it; but Sir Edward told him, 'he knew all hope was vain.' 'I muſt accuſe myſelf, ſaid he, of loſing 'that lovely generous woman, what a treaſure 'would have gladdened my future days, had I not 'raſhly, I fear criminally ſhortened them, not by 'my own hand indeed, but how little different! 'Mad with deſpair, I have ſought all means of ob-'taining, what I imagined the only cure for my 'diſtempered mind. Weary of life, ſince I could 'not poſſeſs her, in whom all my joys, all the 'wiſhes of my ſoul were centered, I ſeized every 'occaſion of expoſing myſelf to the enemy's ſword. 'Contrary to my hopes, I eſcaped many times, 'when death ſeemed unavoidable; but grown more 'deſperate by diſappointment, I this morning went 'on an attack, where inſtead of attempting to con-'quer, all my endeavour was to be killed, and at 'laſt I ſucceeded, how fatally!' Oh! my Louiſa, 'continued he, and do I then loſe thee by my own 'impatience! Had I, like thee, ſubmitted to the 'diſpoſition of providence, had I waited, from its 'mighty power, that relief which it alone can 'give, I might now be expecting with rapture the hour

'hour that ſhould have united us for ever, inſtead 'of preparing for that which ſhall ſummon me to 'the grave, where even thou ſhalt be forgotten, 'and the laſt traces of thy lovely image effaced from 'my too faithful remembrance. How juſt are the 'decrees of the Almighty! Thy patience, thy re-'ſignation, and uncommon virtues are rewarded 'as they ought; my petulance, my impatience, 'which, as it were, flew in the face of my Maker, 'and ſought to loſe a life which he had intruſted to 'my keeping, and required me to preſerve, is de-'ſervedly puniſhed. I am deprived of that exiſt-'ence, which I would now endure whole ages of 'pain to recal, were it to be done, but it is paſt, 'and I ſubmit to thy juſtice, thou all wiſe diſpoſer 'of my fate.'

The agitation of Sir Edward's mind had given him a flow of falſe ſpirits, but at length they failed, leaving him only the more exhauſted. He kept Mrs. Thornby's letter on his pillar, and read it many times. Frequent were his expreſſions of regret for his own raſhneſs, and he felt much concern from the fear that Louiſa would be ſhocked with his death. Her mother's proceedings convinced him ſhe was not void of regard for him; he now ſaw that he had not vainly flattered himſelf, when he imagined, from many little circumſtances, that her heart ſpoke in his favour; and the force ſhe muſt have put on her affections, raiſed his opinion of her almoſt to adoration. He often told his faithful attendant, that in thoſe moments he felt a joy beyond what he had ever yet experienced, in believing Louiſa loved him; but theſe emotions were ſoon checked by reflecting, that if ſhe did ſo, ſhe could not hear of his death without ſuffering many heart-felt pangs.

He lingered for three days, without the leaſt encouragement to hope for life, and on the laſt died with great reſignation, receiving his death as a puniſhment juſtly due to his want of ſubmiſſion in the divine will, and that froward petulance which drove him to deſperation, in not ſucceeding to his wiſhes, juſt at the time, that to his impetuous paſſions, and ſhort-ſighted reaſon, appeared moſt deſirable.

The afflicted ſteward wrote an account of this melancholy event to Lady Lambton, and ſtaid to attend Sir Edward's body home, that his laſt remains might be depoſited in the family vault.

Lady Lambton received theſe mournful tidings with exceſſive grief, and communicated them to Mrs. Thornby. Louiſa, from the time of the meſſenger's ſetting out for Germany, had been pleaſing herſelf with reflecting on the joyful reception he would meet with from Sir Edward, and had frequently anticipated, in imagination, the pleaſures ſhe and Sir Edward would receive at ſeeing each other, after ſo melancholy a ſeparation. She now every hour expected him, and when Mrs. Thornby began to prepare her againſt ſurprize, ſhe imagined he was arrived, and that her kind mother was endeavouring to guard her againſt too ſudden joy. She attempted to break through the delay, which muſt ariſe from all this caution, by begging to know if he was in the houſe, deſiring her not to fear any ill effects from his ſudden appearance, and roſe from her ſeat, in order to attend her mother to Sir Edward. Mrs. Thornby made her ſit down again, and with a countenance which ſpoke very different things from what ſhe expected, acquainted her with the fatal end of all her hopes.

Louiſa was ſhocked in proportion to the degree to which ſhe was before elated. She ſunk lifeleſs

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in the arms of her mother, who had claſped her to her breaſt, and it was a conſiderable time before their cruel endeavours to bring her to her ſenſes ſucceeded. Her firſt ſenſation was an agony of grief; ſhe accuſed herſelf of being the occaſion of Sir Edward's death, and from the unfortunate conſequences of her actions, arraigned her motives for them. Mrs. Thornby and Mr. d'Avora, whom ſhe had ſent for on this occaſion, endeavoured to convince her, ſhe was no way to blame, that what ſhe had done was laudable, and ſhe ought not to judge of an action by its conſequences, which muſt always remain in the hands of the Almighty, to whom we are accountable for our motives, but who beſt knows when they ought to be crowned with ſucceſs. When they had prevailed with her to exculpate herſelf, her piety and patience made it the more eaſy to perſuade her calmly to ſubmit to the decrees of providence. She ſoon ſaw, that to ſuffer was her duty, and though ſhe might grieve, ſhe muſt not repine. The good advice of her two friends was ſome ſupport to her mind, but her chief ſtrength aroſe from her frequent petitions to him who tried her in ſufferings, to grant her patience to bear them with due reſignation. Such addreſſes, fervently and ſincerely made, can never be unavailing, and ſhe found the conſolation ſhe aſked for. Her affliction was deep, but ſilent and ſubmiſſive, and in no part of her life did ſhe ever appear more amiable than on this trying occaſion, when her extreme ſenſibility could never extort one word or thought which was not dictated by humble piety, and the moſt exemplary reſignation. That Sir Edward had had ſo juſt a ſenſe of his own error, and ſo properly repented his impatience was a great conſolation, and ſhe hoped to meet him whom ſhe

ſhe had ſo ſoon loſt, in a ſtate of happineſs, where they ſhould never more be parted.

Mrs Morgan had borne a tender ſhare in all Louiſa's joys and ſorrows; for in the frequency of her correſpondence, every circumſtance that attended the latter was faithfully imparted, though the communication was leſs free on Mrs. Morgan's ſide, who, contrary to her natural temper, acted with reſerve on this particular; induced by a double motive, a belief that it was her duty to conceal her huſband's faults, and a deſire to ſpare her friend the pain of ſuffering participation in her vexations. She longed to attend Miſs Mancel in her affliction, but dared not urge a requeſt with which ſhe knew Mr. Morgan would not comply. He lived intirely in the country, and ſeemed to be totally inſenſible to the pleaſure of contributing to the happineſs of others. All his tenderneſs was confined within the narrow circle of himſelf. Mrs. Morgan daily beheld diſtreſs and poverty without the power of relieving it, for his parcimony would not let him truſt her with the diſpoſal of what money was neceſſary for her own expences, his ſiſter always bought what they in their wiſdoms judged requiſite, and Mrs. Morgan was treated in thoſe affairs like a little child.

In matters too trifling to come within Mr. Morgan's notice, Mrs. Suſanna, fearing her ſiſter ſhould enjoy a moment's eaſe, took care to perform her part in teazing, as if their joint buſineſs was only to keep that poor woman in a conſtant ſtate of ſuffering. To compleat her vexation, Mr. Morgan, who had always drank hard, increaſed ſo much in that vice, that few days paſſed wherein he was not totally intoxicated. Mrs. Morgan ſaw no means of redreſs, and therefore thought it beſt

beſt to ſuffer without complaint; ſhe conſidered, that, by contention, ſhe could not prevail over their ill temper, but muſt infallibly ſour her own, and deſtroy that compoſure of mind, neceſſary to enable every one to acquit herſelf well in all Chriſtian duties. By this patient acquieſcence her virtues were refined, though her health ſuffered, and ſhe found ſome ſatisfaction in reflecting, that him whom ſhe moſt wiſhed to pleaſe, would graciouſly accept her endeavours; however unavailing they might be towards obtaining the favour of thoſe on whom her earthly peace depended.

At this part of Mrs. Maynard's narration we were again interrupted by dinner, but the arrival of ſome viſitors in the afternoon, afforded Lamont and myſelf an opportunity of begging her to give us the ſequel, and for that purpoſe we choſe a retired ſeat in the garden; when ſhe thus proceeded.

The next ſix years of Miſs Mancel's life paſſed in a perfect calm; this may appear too cold an expreſſion, ſince her ſituation was ſuch, as would by moſt people have been thought conſummate happineſs. Mrs. Thornby's ample fortune enabled them to live in great figure, and Miſs Mancel's beauty and underſtanding rendered her the object of general admiration. Had her conduct been leſs amiable, ſhe could not but have acquired many lovers; it is not ſtrange then, ſuch as ſhe was, that ſhe ſhould be addreſſed by many men of diſtinguiſhed rank and fortune. Wherever ſhe appeared, ſhe attracted all eyes, and engroſſed the whole attention. Mrs. Thornby, more delighted with the admiration paid her daughter than ſhe herſelf, carried her frequently into public, and kept a great deal of company. Louiſa could not be inſenſible

ſenſible to the general approbation, but was hurt with the ſerious attachment of thoſe who more particularly addreſſed her. As ſhe was determined never to marry, thinking it a ſort of infidelity to a man, whoſe death was owing to his affection for her, ſhe always took the firſt opportunity of diſcouraging every purſuit of that kind; and reſtrained the natural vivacity of her temper, leſt it ſhould give riſe to any hopes which could end only in diſappointment. She endeavoured to make publickly known her fixed determination never to marry; but as thoſe reſolutions are ſeldom thought unalterable, many men flattered themſelves, that their rank and fortunes, with their perſonal merits, might conquer ſo ſtrange an intention, and therefore would not deſiſt without an expreſs refuſal.

In the ſeventh year after Mrs. Thornby's return into England, ſhe was taken off by a fever, and left Miſs Mancel, at twenty four years of age, in poſſeſſion of forty thouſand pounds, a fortune which could not afford her any conſolation for the loſs of ſo tender a parent. Having nothing to attach her to any particular part of the kingdom, ſhe more than ever longed to ſettle in Mrs. Morgan's neighbourhood, but feared to occaſion ſome new uneaſineſs to her friend, and was ſenſible, that if, when vicinity favoured them, they ſhould be denied the pleaſure of each others company, or very much reſtrained in it, the mortification would be ſtill greater than when diſtance would not permit them to meet. She had the ſatisfaction of hearing from her friend, that Mr. Morgan ſeemed to eſteem her more than for ſome years after their marriage, and often gave her reaſon to think he did not deſpiſe her underſtanding, and was well pleaſed with her conduct. The truth was, this gentleman's eyes were at laſt opened to the merits

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of his wife's behaviour, the long trial he had made of her obedience, which was implicit, and performed with apparent chearfulneſs; if compared with his ſiſter's conduct, could not fail of appearing in an amiable light, when he was no longer beſet with the malicious inſinuations of Suſanna, who had beſtowed herſelf on a young enſign, whoſe ſmall hopes of preferment in the army, reduced him to accept that lady and her fortune as a melancholy reſource, but his only certain proviſion. This alteration in Mr. Morgan's temper gave Mrs. Morgan and Louiſa room to hope that he might not always continue averſe to their becoming neighbours.

While they were flattering themſelves with this agreeable proſpect, Mr. Morgan was ſeized with a paralytic diſorder, which at firſt attacked his limbs, but in a very ſhort time affected his head ſo much, as almoſt to deprive him of his ſenſes. He was totally confined to his bed, and ſeemed not to know any one but his wife. He would take neither medicine nor nouriſhment except from her hands; as he was entirely lame, ſhe was obliged to feed him, and he was not eaſy if ſhe was out of the room. Even in the night he would frequently call to her; if ſhe appeared at his bed-ſide, he was then contended, being ſure ſhe was in the chamber, but would fall into violent paſſions, which he had not words to expreſs (for he was almoſt deprived of his ſpeech) if ſhe did not inſtantly appear.

When Miſs Mancel heard of his deplorable ſituation, ſhe was under the greateſt apprehenſions for her friend's health, from ſo cloſe and ſo fatiguing an attendance, and begged ſhe might come to her, as he was then incapable of taking umbrage at it. The offer was too agreeable to be rejected, and theſe ladies met after ſo long an enforced ſeparation,

tion, with a joy not to be imagined by any heart leſs ſuſceptible than theirs, of the tender and delicate ſenſations of friendſhip. Louiſa was almoſt as conſtantly in Mr. Morgan's room in the day time, as his wife, though ſhe kept out of his ſight, and thus they had full opportunity of converſing together; for though the ſick man often called Mrs. Morgan, yet as ſoon as he ſaw ſhe was in the chamber, he ſunk again into that ſtate of ſtupefaction, from which he never recovered. Mrs. Morgan put a bed up in his room, and lay there conſtantly, but as he was as ſolicitious to know ſhe was preſent in the night, as in the day, ſhe could never quite undreſs herſelf the whole time of his ſickneſs.

In this condition Mr. Morgan lay for three months, when death releaſed him from this world; and brought a ſeaſonable relief to Mrs. Morgan, whoſe health was ſo impaired by long confinement, and want of quiet reſt, that ſhe could not much longer have ſupported it; and vexation had before ſo far impaired her conſtitution, that nothing could have enabled her to undergo ſo long a fatigue, but the infinite joy ſhe received from Miſs Mancel's company.

When Mr. Morgan's will was opened, it appeared, that he had left his wife an eſtate which fell to him about a month before the commencement of his illneſs, where we now live. The income of it is a thouſand pounds a year; the land was thoroughly ſtocked, and the houſe in good repair. Mr. Morgan had at his marriage ſettled a jointure on his wife of four hundred pounds a year rent charge, and in a codicil made juſt after his ſiſter's wedding; he bequeathed her two thouſand pounds in ready money.

After

After Mrs. Morgan had ſettled all her affairs, it was judged neceſſary, that, for the recovery of her health, ſhe ſhould go to Tunbridge, to which place Miſs Mancel accompanied her. As Mrs. Morgan's dreſs confined her entirely at home, they were not in the way of making many acquaintance; but lady Mary Jones being in the houſe, and having long been known to Miſs Mancel, though no intimacy had ſubſiſted between them, they now became much connected. The two friends had agreed to retire into the country, and though both of an age and fortune to enjoy all the pleaſures which moſt people ſo eagerly purſue, they were deſirous of fixing in a way of life where all their ſatisfactions might be rational, and as conducive to eternal, as to temporal happineſs. They had laid the plan of many things, which they have ſince put into execution, and engaged Mr. D'Avora to live with them, both as a valuable friend, and an uſeful aſſiſtant, in the management of their affairs.

Lady Mary was at that time ſo much in the ſame diſpoſition, and ſo charmed with ſuch part of their ſcheme as they communicated to her, that ſhe begged to live with them for half a year, by which time they would be able to ſee whether they choſe her continuance there, and ſhe ſhould have experienced how far their way of life was agreeable to her. Lady Mary's merit was too apparent not to obtain their ready conſent to her propoſal, and when they had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing Mrs. Morgan much recovered by the waters, and no farther benefit was expected, they came to this houſe.

They found it ſufficiently furniſhed, and in ſuch good order, that they ſettled in it without trouble. The condition of the poor ſoon drew their attention, and they inſtituted ſchools for the young, and alms-houſes for the old. As they ordered every thing

thing in their own family with great œconomy, and thought themſelves entitled only to a part of their fortunes, their large incomes allowed them full power to aſſiſt many, whoſe ſituations differed very eſſentially from theirs. The next expence they undertook, after theſe eſtabliſhment of ſchools and alms-houſes, was that of furniſhing a houſe for every young couple that married in their neighbourhood, and providing them with ſome ſort of ſtock, which by induſtry would prove very conducive towards their living in a comfortable degree of plenty. They have always paid nurſes for the ſick, ſent them every proper refreſhment, and allow the ſame ſum weekly which the ſick perſon could have gained, that the reſt of the family may not loſe any part of their ſupport, by the incapacity of one.

When they found their fortunes would ſtill afford a larger communication, they began to receive the daughters of perſons in office, or other life-incomes, who, by their parent's deaths, were left deſtitute of proviſion; and when, among the lower ſort, they meet with an uncommon genius, they will admit her among the number. The girls you ſee ſit in the room with us are all they have at preſent in that way; they are educated in ſuch a manner as will render them acceptable, where accompliſhed women of an humble rank and behaviour are wanted, either for the care of a houſe or children. Theſe girls are never out of the room with us, except at breakfaſt and dinner, and after eight o'clock in the evening, at which times they are under the immediate care of the houſe-keeper, with whom they are allowed to walk out for an hour or two every fine day; leſt their being always in our company ſhould make them think their ſituation above a menial ſtate; they attend us while we are dreſſing, and we endeavour that the time they

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are thus employed ſhall not paſs without improvement. They are clad coarſe and plain for the ſame reaſon, as nothing has a ſtronger influence on vanity than dreſs.

Each of us takes our week alternately of more particular inſpection over the performances of theſe girls, and they all read by turns aloud to ſuch of us, as are employed about any thing that renders it not inconvenient to liſten to them. By this ſort of education my friends hope to do extenſive good, for they will not only ſerve theſe poor orphans, but confer a great benefit on all who ſhall be committed to their care, or have occaſion for their ſervice; and one can ſet no bounds to the advantages that may ariſe from perſons of excellent principles, and enlarged underſtandings, in the ſituations wherein they are to be placed. In every thing their view is to be as beneficial to ſociety as poſſible, and they are ſuch œconomiſts even in their charities, as to order them in a manner, that as large a part of mankind as poſſible ſhould feel the happy influence of their bounty.

In this place, and in this way of life, the three ladies already mentioned have lived upwards of twenty years; for Lady Mary Jones joined her fortune to thoſe of the two friends, never chuſing to quit them, and is too agreeable not to be very deſirable in the ſociety. Miſs Mancel has often declared, that ſhe plainly ſees the merciful hand of providence bringing good out of evil, in an event, which ſhe, at the time it happened, thought her greateſt misfortune; for had ſhe married Sir Edward Lambton, her ſincere affection for him would have led her to conform implicitly to all his inclinations, her views would have been confined to this earth, and too ſtrongly attached to human objects, to have properly obeyed the giver of the bleſſings

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ſhe ſo much valued, who is generally leſs thought of, in proportion as he is more particularly bountiful. Her age, her fortune, and compliant temper, might have ſeduced her into diſſipation, and have made her loſe all the heart-felt joys ſhe now daily experiences, both when ſhe reflects on the paſt, contemplates the preſent, or anticipates the future.

I think I ought to mention Mrs. Morgan's behaviour to her half ſiſters. Sir Charles died about five years ago, and through his wife's extravagance, left his eſtate over-charged with debts, and two daughters and a ſon unprovided for. Lady Melvyn's jointure was not great; Sir George, her eldeſt ſon, received but juſt ſufficient out of his eſtate to maintain himſelf genteelly. By the firſt Lady Melvyn's marriage ſettlements, ſix thouſand pounds were ſettled on her children, which, as Mrs. Morgan was her only child, became her property; this ſhe divided between her mother-in-law's three younger children, and has beſides conferred ſeveral favors on that family, and frequently makes them valuable preſents. The young gentlemen and ladies often paſs ſome time here; Lady Melvyn made us a viſit in the firſt year of her widowhood, but our way of life is ſo ill ſuited to her taſte, that, except during that dull period of confinement, ſhe has never favoured us with her company.

My couſin, I believe, was going to mention ſome other of the actions of theſe ladies, which ſeemed a favorite topic with her, when the reſt of he company came into the garden, and we thought ourſelves obliged to join them.

The afternoons, in this family, generally concluded with one of their delightful concerts; but as ſoon as the viſitors were departed, the ladies ſaid, they would amuſe us that evening with an entertainment,

tertainment, which might poſſibly be more new to us, a ruſtic ball. The occaſion of it was the marriage of a young woman, who had been brought up by them, and had for three years been in ſervice, but having for that whole time been courted by a young farmer of good character, ſhe had been married in the morning, and that evening was dedicated to the celebration of their wedding.

We removed into the ſervants hall, a neat room, and well lighted, where we found a very numerous aſſembly; ſixteen couple were preparing to dance; the reſt were only ſpectators. The bride was a pretty genteel girl, dreſſed in a white callico gown, white ribbons, and in every particular neat to an exceſs. The bridegroom was a well looking young man, as clean and ſprucely dreſſed as his bride, though not with ſuch emblematic purity. This couple, contrary to the cuſtom of finer people on ſuch occaſions, were to begin the ball together; but Lamont aſked leave to be the bride's partner for two or three dances, a compliment not diſagreeable to the ladies, and highly pleaſing to the reſt of the company, except the bride, whoſe vanity one might plainly ſee did not find gratification enough in having ſo genteel a partner, to recompence her for the loſs of her Colin; he, however, ſeemed well ſatisfied with the honour conferred on his wife.

That the bridegroom might not be without his ſhare of civility, the ladies gave him leave to dance with the eldeſt of the young girls more particularly under their care, till his wife was reſtored to him.

We ſat above an hour with this joyous company, whoſe mirth ſeemed as pure as it was ſincere, and I never ſaw a ball managed with greater decorum. There is a coquettry and gallantry appropriated to

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all conditions, and to ſee the different manner in which it was expreſſed in this little ſet, from what one is accuſtomed to behold in higher life, afforded me great amuſement; and the little arts uſed among theſe young people to captivate each other, were accompanied with ſo much innocence, as made it exceſſively pleaſing. We ſtaid about an hour and half in this company, and then went to ſupper.

My couſin told me that Mrs. Mancel gave the young bride a fortune, and that ſhe might have her ſhare of employment, and contribute to the proviſion for her family, had ſtocked her dairy, and furniſhed her with poultry. This, Mrs. Maynard added, was what they did for all the young women they brought up, if they proved deſerving; ſhewing, likewiſe, the ſame favor to any other girls in the pariſh, who, during their ſingle ſtate, behaved with remarkable induſtry and ſobriety. By this mark of diſtinction they were incited to a proper behaviour, and appeared more anxious for this benevolence, on account of the honour that aroſe from it, than for the pecuniary advantage.

As the ladies conduct in this particular was uncommon, I could not forbear telling them, that 'I 'was ſurprized to find ſo great encouragement given 'to matrimony by perſons, whoſe choice ſhewed 'them little inclined in its favour.'

Does it ſurprize you, anſwered Mrs. Melvyn ſmiling, 'to ſee people promote that in others, which 'they themſelves do not chuſe to practiſe? We 'conſider matrimony as abſolutely neceſſary to the 'good of ſociety; it is a general duty; but as, ac'cording to all antient tenures, thoſe obliged to 'perform knight's ſervice, might, if they choſe 'to enjoy their own fire-ſides, be excuſed by 'ſending deputies to ſupply their places; ſo we,

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'uſing the ſame privilege ſubſtitute many others,
'and certainly much more promote wedlock, than
'we could do by entering into it ourſelves.
'This may wear the appearance of ſome devout
'perſons of a certain religion, who equally indo-
'lent and timorous, when they do not chuſe to
'ſay ſo many prayers as they think their duty,
'pay others for ſupplying their deficiencies.'

'In this caſe, ſaid I, your example is ſomewhat
'contradictory, and ſhould it be intirely followed,
'it would confine matrimony to the lower rank of
'people, among whom it ſeems going out of fa-
'ſhion, as well as with their ſuperiors; nor indeed
'can we wonder at it, for diſſipation and extra-
'vagance are now become ſuch univerſal vices, that
'it requires great courage in any to enter into an
'indiſſoluble ſociety. Inſtead of being ſurpriſed
'at the common diſinclination to marriage, I am
'rather diſpoſed to wonder when I ſee a man ven-
'ture to render himſelf liable to the expences of a
'woman, who laviſhes both her time and money
'on every faſhionable folly, and ſtill more, when
'one of your ſex ſubjects herſelf to be reduced
'to poverty, by a huſband's love for gaming, and
'to neglect by his inconſtancy.'

'I am of your opinion, ſaid Mrs. Trentham,
'to face the enemy's cannon appears to me a leſs ef-
'fort of courage, than to put our happineſs into the
'hands of a perſon, who perhaps will not once
'reflect on the importance of the truſt committed
'to his or her care. For the caſe is pretty equal
'as to both ſexes, each can deſtroy the other's
'peace. Ours ſeems to have found out the means
'of being on an equallity with yours. Few for-
'tunes are ſufficient to ſtand a double expence.
'The huſband muſt attend the gaming-table and
'horſe-races; the wife muſt have a profuſion of

'ornaments for her perſon, and cards for her entertainment. The care of the eſtate and family are left in the hands of ſervants, who, in imitation of their maſters and miſtreſſes, will have their pleaſures, and theſe muſt be ſupplied out of the fortunes of thoſe they ſerve. Man and wife are often nothing better than aſſiſtants in each others ruin; domeſtic virtues are exploded, and ſocial happineſs deſpiſed, as dull and inſipid.

'The example of the great infects the whole community. The honeſt tradeſman who wiſhes for a wife to aſſiſt him in his buſineſs, and to take care of his family, dare not marry, when every woman of his own rank, emulating her ſuperiors, runs into ſuch faſhions of dreſs, as require great part of his gains to ſupply, and the income which would have been thought ſufficient ſome years ago for the wife of a gentleman of large eſtate, will now ſcarcely ſerve to enable a tradeſman's wife to appear like her neighbours. They too muſt have their evening parties, they muſt attend the places of public diverſion, and muſt be allowed perpetual diſſipation without controul. The poor man ſighs after the days when his father married; then cleanlineſs was a woman's chief perſonal ornament, half the quantity of ſilk ſufficed for her cloaths, variety of trumpery ornaments were not thought of, her huſband's buſineſs employed her attention, and her children were the objects of her care. When he came home, wearied with the employment of the day, he found her ready to receive him, and was not afraid of being told ſhe was gone to the play or opera, or of finding her engaged in a party at cards, while he was reduced to ſpend his evening alone. But in a world ſo chang'ed, a man dare not venture on marriage which

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'promiſes him no comfort, and may occaſion his 'ruin, nor wiſhes for children, whoſe mother's ne-'glect may expoſe them to deſtruction.

'It is common to blame the lower ſort of peo-'ple for imitating their ſuperiors; but it is equally 'the fault of every ſtation, and therefore thoſe of 'higher rank ſhould conſider it is their duty to ſet 'no examples that may hurt others. A degree 'of ſubordination is always acquieſced in, but 'while the nobleman lives like a prince, the gen-'tleman will riſe to the proper expences of a no-'bleman, and the tradeſman take that vacant 'rank which the gentleman has quitted; nor will 'he be aſhamed of becoming a bankrupt, when 'he ſees the fortunes of his ſuperiors mouldering 'away, and knows them to be oppreſſed with 'debts. Whatever right people may have to make 'free with their own happineſs, a beneficial ex-'ample is a duty which they indiſpenſibly owe to 'ſociety, and the profuſe have the extravagance 'of their inferiors to anſwer for. The ſame may 'be ſaid for thoſe who contribute to the diſſipa-'tion of others, by being diſſipated themſelves.'

'But, madam, interrupted Lamont, do you 'think it incumbent on people of faſhion to re-'linquiſh their pleaſures, leſt their example ſhould 'lead others to neglect their buſineſs?'

'I ſhould certainly, replied Mrs. Trentham, 'anſwer you in the affirmative, were the caſe as 'you put it, but much more ſo in the light I ſee 'it. Every ſtation has its duties, thoſe of the 'great are more various than thoſe of their infe-'riors. They are not ſo confined to œconomical 'attentions, nor ought they to be totally without 'them; but their more extenſive influence, their 'greater leiſure to ſerve their Creator with all the 'powers of their minds, conſtitute many duties on

'their part, to which diſſipation is as great an e-
'nemy, as it can be to thoſe more entirely domeſ-
'tic; therefore on each ſide there is an equal neg-
'lect; and why ſhould we expect that ſuch as we
'imagine have fewer advantages of education,
'ſhould be more capable of reſiſting temptations,
'and dedicating themſelves ſolely to the perform-
'ance of their duties, than perſons whoſe minds
'are more improved?'

'I cannot deny, anſwered Lamont, but what
'you ſay is juſt, yet I fear you have uttered truths
'that muſt continue entirely ſpeculative; though
'if any people have a right to turn reformers,
'you ladies are beſt qualified, ſince you begin by
'reforming yourſelves; you practiſe more than
'you preach, and therefore muſt always be liſtened
'to with attention.'

'We do not ſet up for reformers, ſaid Mrs.
'Mancel, we wiſh to regulate ourſelves by the
'laws laid down to us, and as far as our influence
'can extend, endeavour to inforce them; beyond
'that ſmall circle all is foreign to us; we have
'ſufficient employment in improving ourſelves; to
'mend the world requires much abler hands.'

'When you talk of laws, madam, by which
'you would regulate your actions, ſaid Lamont,
'you raiſe a juſt alarm; as for matter of opinion,
'every one may demand an equal power, but laws
'ſeem to require obedience; pray, from whence
'do you take thoſe which you wiſh to make your
'rule of life?'

'From whence, anſwered Mrs. Mancel, ſhould
'a Chriſtian take them, from the Alcoran, think
'you, or from the wiſer Confucius, or would you
'ſeek in Coke on Littleton, that you may eſcape
'the iron hand of the legiſlative power? No, ſure-
'ly, the Chriſtian's law is written in the Bible,

'there,

'there, independent of the political regulations of 'particular communities, is to be found the law 'of the ſupreme Legiſlator. There, indeed, is 'contained the true and invariable law of nati-'ons; and according to our performance of it, we 'ſhall be tried by a Judge, whoſe wiſdom and im-'partiality ſecure him from error, and whoſe power 'is able to execute his own decrees. This is the 'law I meant, and whoever obeys it, can never 'offend eſſentially againſt the private ordinances 'of any community. This all to whom it has 'been declared are bound to obey, my conſent to 'receive it for the rule of my actions is not ma-'terial; for as whoever lives in England muſt ſub-'mit to the laws of the country, though he may 'be ignorant of many of the particulars of them; 'ſo whoever lives in a Chriſtian land is obliged to 'obey the laws of the Goſpel, or to ſuffer for in-'fringing them; in both caſes, therefore, it is 'prudent for every man to acquaint himſelf tho-'roughly with theſe ordinances, which he cannot 'break with impunity.'

'If ſuch obedience be neceſſary, ſaid Lamont, 'what do you imagine will be the fate of moſt 'of the inhabitants of Chriſtendom; for you will 'allow, that they do not regulate their conduct by 'ſuch ſevere commands?'

'What will be their fate, replied Mrs. Man-'cel, I do not pretend even to ſuppoſe, my buſi-'neſs is to take care of my own. The laws a-'gainſt robbery are not rendered either leſs juſt, 'or leſs binding, by the numbers that daily ſteal, 'or who demand your purſe on the high-way. Laws 'are not abrogated by being infringed, nor does 'the diſobedience of others make the obſervance 'of them leſs my duty. I am required to anſwer 'only for myſelf, and it is not man whom I am

'ordered to imitate. His failings will not excuſe 'mine. Humility forbids me to cenſure others, 'and prudence obliges me to avoid copying them.'

'Lamont thought Mrs. Mancel too ſevere in 'her doctrine; but there was ſomething ſo reſpect-'able in her ſeverity, that he forbore to conteſt it, 'and owned to me afterwards, that, while ſhe 'ſpoke, and he contemplated that amiable ſociety, 'his heart ſilently acquieſced in the juſtneſs of her 'ſentiments.'

We parted at our uſual hour; and at the ſame time the company in the lower part of the houſe broke up, eleven o'clock being the ſtated hour for them on thoſe occaſions to return to their reſpective homes.

The next morning, as I went down ſtairs, I met the houſe-keeper, and entered into converſation with her, for which the preceding night's feſtivity furniſhed me with topics. From her I learnt, that ſince the ladies had been eſtabliſhed in that houſe, they had given fortunes from twenty to an hundred pounds, as merit and occaſion directed, to about thirty young women, and that they had ſeldom celebrated fewer than two marriages in a year, ſometimes more. Nor does their bounty ceaſe on the wedding-day, for they are always ready to aſſiſt them on any emergency; and watch with ſo careful an eye over the conduct of theſe young people, as proves of much greater ſervice to them than the money they beſtow. They kindly, but ſtrongly, reprehend the firſt error, and guard them by the moſt prudent admonitions againſt a repetition of their fault. By little preſents they ſhew their approbation of thoſe who behave well, always proportioning their gifts to the merits of the perſon; which are therefore looked upon as the moſt honourable teſtimony of their conduct, and are treaſured

ſured up as valuable marks of diſtinction. This encouragement has great influence, and makes them vye with each other in endeavours to excel in ſobriety, cleanlineſs, meekneſs and induſtry. She told me alſo, that the young women bred up at the ſchools theſe ladies ſupport, are ſo much eſteemed for many miles round, that it is not uncommon for young farmers, who want ſober good wives, to obtain them from thence, and prefer them to girls of much better fortunes, educated in a different manner, as there have been various inſtances wherein their induſtry and quickneſs of underſtanding, which in a great meaſure ariſes from the manner of their education, has proved more profitable to their huſbands than a more ample dower.

She added, that ſhe keeps a regiſter of all the boys and girls, which, by her good ladies means, have been eſtabliſhed in the world; whereby it appears, that thirty have been apprenticed out to good trades, threeſcore fixed in excellent places, and thirty married. And it ſeldom happens, that any one takes an apprentice or ſervant, till they have firſt ſent to her ladies to know if they have any to recommend.

I expreſſed a deſire to ſee the ſchools, which ſhe obligingly offered to ſhew me, but feared we could not then have time to go thither, as breakfaſt was juſt ready. While I was talking with her, I obſerved, that the fingers of one of her hands were contracted quite cloſe to the palm. I took notice of it to her, Oh! ſir, ſaid ſhe, 'it was the luckieſt 'accident that could poſſibly be; as I was obliged 'to work for my ſupport, I was very much ſhock-'ed at my recovery from a fever, to find myſelf 'deprived of the uſe of an hand, but ſtill tried if 'I could get myſelf received into ſervice; as I was 'ſenſible I could, notwithſtanding my infirmity,

'perform the buſineſs of an houſe-keeper; but no
'one would take me in this maimed condition.
'At laſt I was adviſed to apply to theſe ladies, and
'found what had hitherto been an impediment,
'was a ſtronger recommendation than the good
'character I had from my laſt place; and I am
'ſure I have reaſon to value theſe diſtorted fingers,
'more than ever any one did the handſomeſt hands
'that ever nature made. But, added ſhe, ſmil-
'ing, few of my fellow-ſervants are better quali-
'fied; the cook cannot walk without crutches,
'the kitchen maid has but one eye, the dairy maid
'is almoſt ſtone-deaf, and the houſe maid has but
'one hand; and yet, perhaps, there is no family
'where the buſineſs is better done; for gratitude,
'and a conviction that this is the only houſe into
'which we can be received, makes us exert our-
'ſelves to the utmoſt; and moſt people fail not
'from a deficiency of power, but of inclination.
'Even their muſicians, if you obſerved it, ſir, are
'much in the ſame condition. The ſteward, in-
'deed, muſt be excepted; he is one whom the
'good Mr. d'Avora choſe for the ſake of his inte-
'grity ſome years before he died, as his ſucceſſor
'in the care of the ladies affairs, and employed
'him for ſome time under his own inſpection, that
'he might be ſure he was fit for the purpoſe,
'though he perſuaded the ladies to receive their
'own rents, and direct all the chief concerns of
'their eſtates, which they have done ever ſince,
'ſo that theirs is rather an houſhold than a land
'ſteward. But, except this gentleman and the
'ſhepherd, there is not one of their muſicians,
'that is not under ſome natural diſadvantage; the
'defects of two of them are ſo viſible, I need not
'point them out, but of the other two, one is
'ſubject to violent fits of the ſtone, and the other
'to

'to the aſthma. Thus diſabled from hard labour, 'though they find ſome employment in the ma-'nufacture, yet the additional profit which accrues 'from their playing here, adds much to their com-'fort, as their infirmities render greater expences 'neceſſary to them than to others in their ſta-'tion.'

There was ſomething ſo whimſically good in the conduct of the ladies in theſe particulars, as at firſt made me ſmile; but when I conſidered it more thoroughly, I perceived herein a refinement of charity, which, though extremely uncommon, was entirely rational. I found, that not contended with meerly beſtowing on the indigent as large a part of their fortunes as they can poſſibly ſpare, they carry the notion of their duty to the poor ſo far as to give continual attention to it, and endeavour ſo to apply all they ſpend, as to make almoſt every ſhilling contribute towards the ſupport of ſome perſon in real neceſſity; by this means every expence bears the merit of a donation, in the ſight of him who knows their motives; and their conſtant application is directed towards the relief of others, while to ſuperficial obſervers they ſeem only providing for their own convenience. The faſhionable tradeſman is ſure not to have them in the liſt of his cuſtomers; but ſhould he, through the caprice of the multitude, be left without buſineſs, and ſee his elated hopes blaſted, in all probability he will find theſe ladies his friends. Thoſe whoſe youth render them diſregarded, or whoſe old age breeds neglect, will here meet with deſerved encouragement. This ſort of œconomy pleaſes me much, it is of the higheſt kind, ſince it regards thoſe riches which neither moth nor ruſt can corrupt, nor thieves break through and ſteal; and is within the reach of every perſon's imitation, for

the pooreſt may thus turn their neceſſary expences into virtuous actions. In this they excel others, as much as the bee does the common butterfly; they both feed on the ſame flowers; but while the butterfly only gains a tranſient ſubſiſtence, and flies and flutters in all its gaudy pride, the bee lays up a precious ſtore for its future well being, and may brave all the rigours of winter. Man, indeed, often encroaches on the labours of the bee, and diſappoints it of its reaſonable hope; but no one without our own concurrence can deſpoil us of the treaſures laid up in heaven.

As the good houſe-keeper foretold, the bell ſoon ſummoned me to breakfaſt; which, like every other hour ſpent in that ſociety, was rendered delightful by their rational chearfulneſs, and polite freedom. We offered to take our leave, but ſhould have been diſappointed had we not been aſked to prolong our viſit; nor were we ſo inſincere as to make much reſiſtance to this agreeable invitation; we expreſſed ſome fears of interrupting their better employments; to which Mrs. Morgan replied, by aſſuring us, that we did not do ſo in the leaſt; but added, 'I will tell you plainly, gentlemen, the only 'alteration we ſhall wiſh to make, if you will favour us with your company a few days longer. 'Our family devotions are regular, as you were 'ſtrangers we have not ſummoned you to them, 'but for the reſt of your viſit we muſt beg leave 'to alter that method; for we do not think it a 'proper example to our ſervants, to ſuffer any one 'in this houſe to be excluded from them; though 'as your coming was ſudden, and has been pro'longed only, as it were, from hour to hour, we 'at firſt did not think it neceſſary to require your 'preſence.'

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You may imagine we expreſſed ourſelves obliged by this frankneſs; and, for my own part, I was glad of what appeared to me like being received into a community of ſaints; but was forced to wait for it till night, the devotion of the morning having been paid before breakfaſt, as was uſual in that family.

Mrs. Maynard accompanied us that morning into the park, and having placed ourſelves on a green bank under an elm, by the ſide of the canal, I called on her to perform her promiſe, and increaſe my acquaintance with the reſt of the ladies, by giving ſome account of them.

'I ſhall not the leſs readily comply, ſhe anſwered, for being able to bring what I have to ſay of them into leſs compaſs, than I did my hiſtory of Mrs. Morgan and Miſs Mancel, of whom, when I begin to ſpeak, I always find it difficult to leave off, and am led by my fondneſs for the ſubject into a detail, perhaps too circumſtantial. Lady Mary Jones, by what I have already ſaid, you may have perceived muſt come next in order.'

THE HISTORY OF Lady MARY JONES.

LADY Mary was daughter to the Earl of Brumpton by his ſecond wife, who ſurvived the birth of her child but a few hours. The earl died when his daughter was about ten years old, and having before his ſecond marriage mortgaged to its full value all of his eſtate which was not ſettled on a ſon born of his firſt lady, his daughter was left entirely deſtitute of proviſion. But as ſhe was too young to be much affected with this circumſtance, ſo ſhe had little reaſon to regret it, when an increaſe of years might have awakened a ſenſibility to that particular. Immediately on her father's death ſhe was taken by her aunt Lady Sheerneſs, who declared ſhe ſhould look upon her as her own child, and indeed her indulgence verified the truth of her declaration.

Lady Sheerneſs was a widow; her jointure conſiderable; and her lord at his deceaſe left her ſome thouſand pounds in ready money. When he died ſhe was about twenty five years old, with a good perſon, and infinite vivacity. An unbridled imagination,

gination, ungovernable ſpirits, with a lively arch countenance, and a certain quaintneſs of expreſſion, gained her the reputation of being poſſeſſed of a great deal of wit. Her lord, in the decline of life, had been captivated by her youthful charms, when ſhe was but ſixteen years old. His extreme fondneſs for her, led him to indulge her vivacity in all its ſallies; and frequently while he was laid up at home in the gout, her ladyſhip was the fineſt and gayeſt woman at every place of public reſort. Often, when the acuteneſs of his pains obliged him to ſeek relief from the ſoporific influence of opium, ſhe collected half the town, and though his reſt was diſturbed every moment by a ſucceſſion of impetuous raps at the door, he was never offended; on the contrary, he thought himſelf obliged to her for ſtaying at home, which ſhe had aſſured him was, 'becauſe ſhe could not bear to go abroad 'when he was ſo ill.' This, as the greateſt mark of her tenderneſs he ever received, he failed not to acknowledge with gratitude. She ſcarcely took more pleaſure in having a train of admirers, than his lordſhip felt from it; his vanity was flattered in ſeeing his wife the object of admiration, and fancied himſelf much envied, for ſo valuable a poſſeſſion. Her coquettry charmed him, as the ſallies of that vivacity of which he was ſo fond. He had no tincture of jealouſy in his whole compoſition; and acknowledged, as favors conferred on himſelf, the attentions paid to his wife.

Though Lord Sheerneſs's conduct may appear rather uncommon, yet it ſeemed the reſult of ſome diſcernment, or at leaſt his lady's diſpoſition was ſuch as juſtifies this opinion; ſhe had received a genteel education; no external accompliſhments had been neglected; but her underſtanding and principles were left to the imperfection of nature corrupted

rupted by cuſtom. Religion was thought too ſerious a thing for ſo young a perſon. The opinion of the world was always repreſented to her as the true criterion by which to judge of every thing, and faſhion ſupplied the place of every more material conſideration. With a mind thus formed, ſhe entered the world at ſixteen, ſurrounded with pomp and ſplendor, with every gratification at her command, that an affluent fortune, and an indulgent huſband could beſtow: by nature inclined to no vice, free from all dangerous paſſions, the charm of innocence accompanied her vivacity; undeſigning and artleſs, her follies were originally the conſequences of her ſituation, not conſtitutional, though habit engrafted them ſo ſtrongly, that at length they appeared natural to her. Surrounded with every ſnare that can entrap a youthful mind, ſhe became a victim to diſſipation, and the love of faſhionable pleaſures; deſtitute of any ſtable principles, ſhe was carried full ſail down the ſtream of folly. In the love of coquetry and gaming, few equalled her; no one could exceed her in the purſuit of every trifling amuſement; ſhe had neither leiſure nor inclination to think, her life paſſed in an uninterrupted ſucceſſion of engagements, without reflexion on the paſt, or conſideration on the future conſequences.

The lightneſs of her conduct expoſed her to the addreſſes of many gay men during the life of her lord; but an attachment was too ſerious a thing for her; and while her giddineſs and perpetual diſſipation expoſed her to ſuſpicion, they preſerved her from the vice of which ſhe was ſuſpected: ſhe daily paſſed through the ordeal trial; every ſtep ſhe took was dangerous, but ſhe came off unhurt. Her reputation was indeed doubtful, but her rank and fortune, and the continual amuſements which her

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houſe yielded to her acquaintance, rendered her generally carreſſed.

Her lord's death made no alteration in her way of life; and as her mind was never fixed an hour on any ſubject, ſhe thought not long enough of marriage, to prepare for that ſtate, and therefore continued a widow. She was upwards of forty years old, unchanged in any thing but her perſon, when ſhe took lady Mary Jones, I will not ſay into her care, for that word never entered into her vocabulary, but into her houſe. Lady Mary had naturally a very good underſtanding, and much vivacity, the latter met with every thing that could aſſiſt in its increaſe in the company of Lady Sheerneſs, the other was never thought of: ſhe was initiated into every diverſion at an age, when other girls are confined to their nurſery. Her aunt was fond of her, and therefore inclined to indulgence, beſides ſhe thought the knowledge of the world, which in her opinion was the moſt eſſential qualification for a woman of faſhion, was no way to be learnt, but by an early acquaintance with it.

Lady Mary's age and vivacity rendered this doctrine extremely agreeable; ſhe was pretty, and very lively and entertaining in her converſation, therefore at fifteen years of age ſhe became the moſt carreſſed perſon in every company. She entered into all the faſhionable taſtes, was coquettiſh and extravagant; for Lady Sheerneſs very liberally furniſhed her with money, and felt a ſort of pride in having a niece diſtinguiſhed by the fineneſs of her dreſs, and her profuſion in every expence, as it was well known to have no other ſource, but in her Ladyſhip's generoſity. Though Lady Mary received much adulation, and was the object of general courtſhip, yet ſhe had no ſerious love made to her, till ſhe was between ſixteen and ſeventeen, when

ſhe

ſhe accompanied her aunt to Scarborough: ſhe was there very aſſidouſly followed by a gentleman, reputed of a large fortune in Wales. He was gay and well-bred, his perſon moderately agreeable, his underſtanding ſpecious, and his manner inſinuating. There was nothing very engaging in the man, except the appearance of a very tender attachment. She had before found great pleaſure in being admired; but her vanity was ſtill more flattered in being loved: ſhe knew herſelf capable of amuſing; but till now had never been able to give either pleaſure or pain, according to her ſovereign decree. She grew partial to Mr. Lenman (that was the name of her lover) becauſe he raiſed her conſequence in her own eyes: ſhe played off a thouſand airs of coquettry, which ſhe had never yet had an opportunity to exerciſe for want of a real lover. Sometimes ſhe would elate him by encouragement; at others, freeze him into deſpair by her affected coldneſs: ſhe was never two hours the ſame, becauſe ſhe delighted in ſeeing the variety of paſſions ſhe could excite.

Mr. Lenman was certainly ſufficiently tormented; but ſo great a proficiency in coquettry, at ſo early an age, was no diſcouragement to his hopes. There are no people ſo often the dupe of their own arts as coquets; eſpecially when they become ſo very early in life; therefore, inſtead of being damped in his purſuit, he adapted his behaviour to her foible, vanity, and by aſſuming an air of indifference, could, when he pleaſed, put an end to her affected reſerve; though he was not ſo unpolite a lover, as quite to deny her the gratification ſhe expected from her little arts. He found means, however, to command her attention, by the very ſerious propoſal of matrimony. She had no great inclination for the ſtate, but the novelty pleaſed her,

her. The pleaſure ſhe received from his addreſſes ſhe miſtook for love, and imagined herſelf deeply enamoured, when ſhe was in reality only extremely fluttered; the common error of her age. In the company ſhe had kept matrimony appeared in no very formidable light; ſhe did not ſee that it abridged a woman of any of the liberties ſhe already enjoyed; it only afforded her an opportunity of chuſing her own diverſions; whereas her taſte in thoſe points, ſometimes differed from her aunt's; to whom, however, ſhe was obliged to ſubmit. Thus prepoſſeſſed, both in favour of her lover and his propoſal, ſhe liſtened to him with more attention than ſhe choſe he ſhould perceive; but he was too well acquainted with the pretty arts of coquettry, not to ſee through them. He therefore took courage to inſinuate his deſire of a private marriage, and ventured to perſuade her to take a trip with him to the northern ſide of Berwick upon Tweed.

Lady Mary could not ſee as Mr. Linman's fortune was conſiderable, and her's entirely precarious, why he was ſo apprehenſive of not being accepted by her aunt, but there was ſomething ſpirited in thoſe northern journies, that had always been the objects of her envy. An adventure was the ſupreme pleaſure of life, and theſe pretty flights gave marriage all the charms of romance. To be forced to fly into another kingdom to be married, gave her an air of conſequence; vulgar people might tie the knot at every pariſh-church, but people of diſtinction ſhould do every thing with an eclat. She imagined it very probable, that her aunt would conſent to her union with Mr. Lenman; for, though he was not equal to her in birth, yet he was her ſuperior in fortune; but yet ſhe looked upon his fears of a refuſal as meritorious, ſince he aſſured her they aroſe from his extreme affection, which

filled

filled him with terrors, on the leaſt proſpect of loſing her. 'Should Lady Sheerneſs, he urged, 'reject his propoſal, ſhe might then be extremely 'offended with their marrying, after they knew 'her diſapprobation; but if they did it without 'her knowlege, ſhe would not have room to com-'plain of downright diſobedience, and if it was 'diſpleaſing to her, yet being done, and paſt re-'medy, ſhe would be inclined to make the beſt of 'what was unavoidable, and forgive what ſhe 'could not prevent.'

Theſe arguments were ſufficiently ſolid for a girl of ſixteen, who never thought before, and could ſcarcely be ſaid to do ſo then. Lady Mary complied with his plan, and the day was fixed when they were to take this lively ſtep; their ſeveral ſtages ſettled, and many more arts and contrivances to avoid diſcovery concerted, than they were likely to have any occaſion for; but in that variety of little ſchemes, and romantic expedients, her chief pleaſure in this intended marriage conſiſted.

The day before that on which Lady Mary and her lover were to ſet out for Scotland, ſhe was airing with Lady Sheerneſs, when one of the horſes taking fright, they were overturned down a very ſteep declivity. Lady Sheerneſs was but very little hurt, but Lady Mary was extremely bruiſed; one ſide of her face received a blow, which ſwelled it ſo violently, that her eye was quite cloſed, and her body was all over contuſions. She was taken up ſenſeleſs, entirely ſtunned by the ſhock. As ſoon as ſhe was carried home, ſhe was put to bed; a fever enſued, and ſhe lay a fortnight in a deplorable condition, though her life was not thought to be in danger. Her pain, for the greateſt part of that time, was too acute to ſuffer her to reflect much on

on the different manner in which ſhe had intended to employ that period; and when her mind became more at liberty, her diſappointment did not ſit heavy on her ſpirits; for as her heart was not really touched, ſhe conſidered the delay which this ill-timed accident had occaſioned without any great concern, and rather pleaſed herſelf with thinking, that ſhe ſhould give an uncommon proof of ſpirit, in undertaking a long journey, ſo ſoon after ſhe was recovered, from a very evident proof, that travelling is not free from danger. As ſhe had during this confinement, more time to think than all her life had yet afforded her, a doubt would ſometimes occur, whether ſhe did right in entering into ſuch an engagement without the conſent of her aunt, to whom ſhe was much obliged. But theſe ſcruples ſoon vaniſhed, and ſhe wondered how ſuch odd notions came into her head, never having heard the word duty uſed, but to ridicule ſomebody who made it the rule of their conduct. By all ſhe had been able to obſerve, pleaſure was the only aim of perſons of genius, whoſe thoughts never wandered but from one amuſement to another, and, 'why ſhould not ſhe be guided by inclination as well as other people?' That one queſtion decided the point, and all doubts were baniſhed.

Before the blackneſs which ſucceeded the ſwelling was worn off her face, and conſequently before ſhe could appear abroad, a young Lady of her acquaintance, who, out of *charity*, relinquiſhed the diverſions of the place, to ſit an afternoon with Lady Mary, told her, as a whimſical piece of news ſhe had juſt heard (and to tell which was the real motive for her kind viſit, having long felt a ſecret envy of Lady Mary) that, 'her lover, Mr. Lenman, had been married ſome years, to a young

'lady

'lady of ſmall fortune, whom he treated on that 'account with ſo little ceremony, that for a con-'ſiderable time he did not own his marriage, and 'ſince he acknowleged it, had kept her conſtantly 'at his houſe in Wales.'

This was indeed news of conſequence to Lady Mary, but ſhe was little inclined to believe it, and enquired what proof there was of this fact. The young lady replied, that 'ſhe had it from a rela-'tion of her's lately arrived at Scarborough, who 'having been often in Mr. Lenman's neighbour-'hood, was well acquainted both with him and 'his wife, and had in a pretty large company, 'where ſhe was preſent, aſked him after Mrs. Len-'man's health, to which he made as ſhort an an-'ſwer as he could, but ſuch as ſhewed there was 'ſuch a perſon, and his confuſion on this queſtion 'made her relation enquire what could be the 'meaning of it, which all the company could ea-'ſily explain.'

Lady Mary was prodigiouſly diſconcerted with this intelligence; her informer imagined the viſible agitation of her ſpirits proceeded from her attachment to Mr. Lenman, but in reality it was the effect of terror. She was frighted to think how near ſhe was becoming the object of general ridicule and diſgrace, wedded to a married man, and duped by his cunning; for ſhe immediately perceived why her aunt was not to be let into the ſecret. How contemptible a figure muſt ſhe afterwards have made in the world! There was ſomething in this action of Mr. Lenman's very uncommon, faſhionable vices and follies had in her opinion received a ſanction from cuſtom, but this was of a different and a deeper dye; and little as ſhe had been uſed to reflect on good and evil, in any other light

light than as pleaſant and unpleaſant, ſhe conceived an horror at this action.

After her viſitor departed, ſhe began to reflect on the luckineſs of the overturn, which had obſtructed her raſh deſign, and admiring her good fortune, would certainly have offered rich ſacrifices on the ſhrine of Chance, had there been a temple there erected to that deity.

While her mind was filled with theſe impreſſions, the nurſe, who had attended her in her ſickneſs, and was not yet diſmiſſed, entered the room, crying with joy, and told her, that 'ſhe had juſt re-'ceived the news of the ſhip's being loſt wherein 'her ſon was to have embarked, had he not been 'ſeized with a fit of ſickneſs two days before it ſet 'ſail, which made it impoſſible for him to go on 'board.' The poor woman was profuſe in her acknowledgements for God's great mercy, who had by this means prevented the deſtruction of her dear child; 'to be ſure, added ſhe, I ſhall never 'again repine at any thing that happens to me. 'How vexed I was at this diſappointment, and 'thought myſelf the moſt unfortunate creature in 'the world, becauſe my ſon miſſed of ſuch a good 'poſt as he was to have had in this ſhip; I was 'continually fretting about it, and fancied that ſo 'bad a ſetting out was a ſign the poor boy would 'be unlucky all his life. How different things 'turn out from what we expect! Had not this 'misfortune, as I thought it, happened, he would 'now have been at the bottom of the ſea, and my 'poor heart would have been broken. Well, to 'be ſure God is very kind! I hope my boy will 'always be thankful for this providence, and love 'the Lord who has thus preſerved him.'

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This poor woman ſpoke a new language to Lady Mary. She knew, indeed, that God had made the world, and had ſent her into it, but ſhe had never thought of his taking any farther care about her. She had heard, that he had forbidden murder, and ſtealing, and adultery, and that, after death, he would judge people for thoſe crimes, and theſe ſhe ſuppoſed was the utmoſt extent of his attention. But the joy ſhe felt for her own deliverance, from a misfortune into which ſhe was ſo near involving herſelf, and the reſemblance there was in the means of her preſervation, to that for which her nurſe was ſo thankful, communicated to her ſome of the ſame ſenſations, and ſhe felt a gratitude to him who, ſhe imagined, might poſſibly be more careful over his creatures than ſhe had ever yet ſuppoſed.

Theſe impreſſions, though pretty ſtrong at the time, wore off after ſhe got abroad. A renewal of the ſame diſſipation ſcattered them with every other ſerious thought; and ſhe again entered into the hurry of every trifling amuſement. Mr. Lenman, as ſoon as he found that his marriage was become public, deſpairing of the ſucceſs of his ſcheme, left the place before Lady Mary was out of her confinement, afraid of meeting the reproachful glances of a woman, whom he deſigned to injure; and whoſe innocence, notwithſtanding her levity, gave her dignity in the eyes of a man, who had really conceived an ardent paſſion for her.

Lady Sheerneſs and her niece ſtaid but a ſhort time at Scarborough after the latter was perfectly recovered, the ſeaſon being over. They returned to London, and all the gaiety it affords; and though the town was at that time not full, yet they had ſo general an acquaintance, and Lady Sheerneſs rendered her houſe ſo agreeable, that ſhe never

never wanted company. Every ſeaſon has its different amuſements, and theſe ladies had an equal taſte for every thing that bore the name of diverſion. It is true, they were not always entertained; but they always expected to be ſo, and promiſed themſelves amends the following day, for the diſappointment of the preſent. If they failed of pleaſure, they had diſſipation, and were in too continual a hurry to have time to aſk themſelves whether they were amuſed; if they ſaw others were ſo, they imagined themſelves muſt be equally entertained; or if the dullneſs of the place was too great to be overlooked, they charged it on their own want of ſpirits, and complained of a languor, which rendered them incapable of receiving pleaſure.

Lady Mary fortunately had had no confidant in her deſign of running away with Mr. Lenman, and the part he had acted was ſo diſhonourable, he could not wiſh to publiſh it; her imprudence was therefore known only to herſelf; and the fear of diſobliging her aunt, by letting her intended diſobedience reach her ears, induced her to conceal it; otherwiſe, moſt probably, in ſome unguarded hour, ſhe would have amuſed her acquaintance with the relation, embelliſhed with whatever circumſtances would have rendered it amuſing; for the love of being entertaining, and the vanity of being liſtened to with eagerneſs, will lead people of ungoverned vivacity to expoſe their greateſt failings.

Lady Mary's levity encouraged her admirers to conceive hopes, which her real innocence ſhould have repreſſed. Among this number was Lord Robert St. George. He was both in perſon and manner extremely pleaſing; but what was a ſtronger charm to a young woman of Lady Mary's turn of mind, he was a very faſhionable man, much careſſed by the ladies, and ſuppoſed to have been ſucceſsful

ceſsful in his addreſſes to many. This is always a great recommendation to the gay and giddy; and a circumſtance which ſhould make a man ſhuned by every woman of virtue, ſecures him a favourable reception from the moſt faſhionable part of our ſex.

Lady Mary would have accuſed herſelf of want of taſte, had ſhe not liked a man, whom ſo many others had loved: She ſaw his attachment to her in the light of a triumph over ſeveral of her acquaintance; and when a man raiſes a woman in her own eſteem, it is ſeldom long before he gains a conſiderable ſhare of it for himſelf. Vanity repreſented Lord Robert as a conqueſt of importance, and his qualifications rendered him a very pleaſing dangler. Lady Mary liked him as well as her little leiſure to attend to one perſon would permit: She felt that pleaſure on his approach, that pain at his departure, that ſollicitude for his preſence, and that jealouſy at the civilities he paid any other woman, which girls look upon as the ſymptoms of a violent paſſion, whereas if they were to examine their hearts very nicely they would find, that only a ſmall part of it proceeded from love.

Lord Robert was too well ſkilled in theſe matters, to remain ignorant of the impreſſion he had made; and if he had been leſs quick-ſighted, the frequent intelligence he received of it, would not have ſuffered him long to remain in ignorance. Lady Mary, vain of her conqueſt, and proud of being in love, as is uſual at her age, let every intimate into her confidence, and by mutual communication they talked a moderate liking into a paſſion. Each of theſe young Ladies were as ready to tell their friend's ſecrets as their own, till the circle of that confidence included all their acquaintance.

From

From many of theſe Lord Robert heard of Lady Mary's great attachment to him, which ſerved not a little to flatter his hopes. He imagined he ſhould meet with an eaſy conqueſt of a giddy, thoughtleſs girl, entirely void of all fixed principles, and violently in love with him; for his vanity exaggerated her paſſion. In this perſuaſion he ſuppoſed nothing was wanting to his ſucceſs but opportunity, for which he took care not to wait long.

He was intimately acquainted with an old lady, whom he often met at Lady Sheerneſs's, whoſe diſpoſition he knew well ſuited to his purpoſe; ſhe had before proved convenient to him and others; not indeed by unrewarded aſſiſtance; for as her fortune was too ſmall to ſupply the expences of the genteel way of life ſhe aimed at, ſhe was glad to have that deficiency made up by preſents, which ſhe was therefore very aſſiduous to deſerve. This lady, as ſhe was a woman of faſhion, and lived in figure, was politely received in all gay companies, who were not diſpoſed to take the trouble of examining ſcrupulouſly into her character. She had one material recommendation; ſhe played high at cards, and omitted nothing to make her houſe agreeable; and few were more crouded.

This Lady had often been viſited by Lady Sheerneſs and her niece, though generally at the ſame time with the multitude; but one day, when ſhe knew the former was confined at home by indiſpoſition, ſhe invited Lady Mary, whoſe aunt's complaiſance would not ſuffer her to refuſe the invitation on her account.

Lord Robert was there, and as it was only a private party, there was no card-tables but in the outward room. The miſtreſs of the houſe drew Lady Mary into the inner, on pretence of having ſome-

thing particular to ſay to her; Lord Robert ſoon followed. The converſation grew lively between him and Lady Mary; and when the convenient gentlewoman ſaw them thoroughly engaged and animated in diſcourſe, ſhe quietly withdrew, returning to the company, whoſe attention was too much fixed on the cards, to perceive that any one was miſſing; and to keep their thoughts more entirely engroſſed, ſhe betted with great ſpirit at every table.

Lady Mary did not perceive ſhe was left alone with Lord Robert, till the growing freedom of his addreſs made her obſerve it; but as prudence was not one of her virtues, ſhe was not at all diſconcerted with this *tête à tête*; nor did it leſſen her vivacity. Lord Robert, encouraged by her eaſineſs on the occaſion, declared himſelf ſo plainly, that ſhe was no longer able to blind herſelf to his views, and with ſurprize found ſeduction was his aim, if that word may be uſed for a man's deſigns againſt the honour of a woman who ſeems ſo careleſs of it. Her heart was entirely innocent of vice, and ſhe could not imagine how his lordſhip could conceive it poſſible to ſucceed with her in intenſions of that ſort. She had always thought ſuch imprudence in a woman a very great folly, for in a graver light ſhe had never beheld it, and ſhewed herſelf offended at his ſuppoſing her capable of ſuch a weakneſs; but without that honeſt indignation which a woman would have felt, who had acted on better principles.

Lord Robert was not much diſcouraged; a woman is under great diſadvantage, when her lover knows himſelf to be ſo much beloved, that ſhe dare not let her anger continue long, for fear of loſing

loſing him for ever. He was well convinced, that meer worldly prudence could not make a laſting reſiſtance againſt a ſtrong paſſion, and ſuch he flattered himſelf her's was. He therefore ventured to reſume the ſubject; but his perſeverance increaſed Lady Mary's ſurprize, and ſhe began to think herſelf affronted. Her partiality pleaded in his favour ſome time; but at length ſhe thought it neceſſary to retire, notwithſtanding his utmoſt endeavours to detain her. As ſhe left him, ſhe deſired him to learn to believe better of her underſtanding: ſhe perceived it no otherwiſe an inſult; her education had deprived her of that delicacy, which ſhould have made her feel a ſevere mortification at the little ſhare ſhe had of the good opinion of a man ſhe loved; on the contrary, ſhe eſteemed the affront ſhe had received a proof of his affection. She had often indeed heard the name of virtue, but by the uſe ſhe had known made of the word, it appeared to her to have no other ſignification than prudence. She was not at all ſhocked with Lord Robert's conduct; but reſolved not to concur in his views, becauſe ſhe had no inclination to do ſo, that overbalanced her very moderate degree of prudence. On this account ſhe determined to avoid being again alone with him.

Lady Mary's natural ſenſe gave riſe to ſome doubts, whether the very open profeſſions of gallantry, which Lord Robert had made to her were common; ſhe had been frequently addreſſed with freedom, but his behaviour ſeemed more than commonly preſuming. In order to find what others would think of it; ſhe often turned the converſation to thoſe ſort of ſubjects, and was a good deal ſtartled one day by a lively, but amiable and modeſt young lady, who ſaid, ſhe believed no man that was not an ab-

ſolute fool, or at the time intoxicated, ever inſulted a woman with improper behaviour or diſcourſe; if he had not from ſome impropriety in her conduct ſeen reaſon to imagine it would not be ill received; and I am ſure, added ſhe, 'if ſuch a thing 'was ever to befal me, it would convert me into a 'ſtarched prude, for fear that hereafter innocent 'vivacity might be miſtaken for vicious levity: I 'ſhould take myſelf very ſeverely to taſk, convinced the offence was grounded on my conduct; for 'I am well perſuaded there is ſomething ſo reſpectable in virtue, that no man will dare to inſult it, except when a great diſparity in circumſtances encourages an abandoned wretch to 'take advantage of the neceſſity of the indigent.'

Lady Mary was greatly affected by this ſentiment: ſhe began to reflect on her own behaviour; and could not but ſee, that Lord Robert might, without any great danger of offending, hazard the behaviour he had been guilty of; ſince in effect ſhe had not conceived much anger againſt him, and though ſhe had hitherto avoided being again alone with him, yet ſhe had not ſhewn any very great marks of diſpleaſure. She now watched with attention the conduct of other young ladies; many of them ſeemed to act on the ſame principles as herſelf; but ſhe obſerved that ſhe who had by her declaration, firſt raiſed in her ſuſpicions about her own behaviour, had a very different manner from her's. She was indeed gay and lively; but her vivacity ſeemed under the direction of modeſty. In her greateſt flow of ſpirits, ſhe hazarded no improper expreſſion, nor ſuffered others to do ſo without a manifeſt diſguſt: ſhe ſaw that the gentlemen who converſed with her, preſerved an air of reſpect and deference, which they laid aſide when they

they addreſſed women, whoſe vivacity degenerated into levity. She now began to perceive ſome impropriety in her own behaviour, and endeavoured to correct it; but nothing is more difficult than to recover a dignity once loſt. When ſhe attempted to reſtrain her gaiety within proper bounds, ſhe was laughed at for her affectation: if, when the converſation was improper, ſhe aſſumed an air of gravity, ſhe was accuſed of the vapours, or received hints that ſhe was out of humour.

Theſe were great diſcouragements in her endeavours to correct the errors of her conduct, but gave her leſs pain than the difficulties ſhe was under about Lord Robert St. George. He ſtill continued to addreſs her with a freedom of manners which ſhe now perceived was inſulting; ſhe wanted to diſcourage his inſolence, but feared giving a total offence to a man who had too great a ſhare of her affections; ſhe was apprehenſive, that if ſhe quite deprived him of his hopes, ſhe ſhould entirely loſe him, and he would attach himſelf to ſome other woman. This ſituation was dangerous, and Lord Robert knew the power he had over her. The dilemma ſhe was in really abated the vivacity ſhe wiſhed to reſtrain, but it was immediately attributed to the anxiety of a love-ſick mind, and ſhe was expoſed to continual raillery on that ſubject. Her lover ſecretly triumphed, flattering himſelf, that her paſſion was now combating on his ſide.

In this ſituation ſhe was unable to determine what part to act, and all her intimates were too much like herſelf, to be capable of adviſing her. Thus diſtreſſed, ſhe reſolved to cultivate the acquaintance of the young lady who had opened her eyes to her own conduct, and try what relief ſhe could

obtain from her advice. This was eaſily effected; Lady Mary was too amiable, not to have any advances ſhe made anſwered with pleaſure. An intimacy ſoon enſued.

Lady Mary communicated to her new friend all the difficulties of her ſituation, and confeſſed to her the true ſtate of her heart. That young lady was not void of compaſſion for her uneaſineſs; but told her, that, 'while ſhe was encouraging Lord Robert's paſſion, ſhe was loſing his eſteem, which 'alone was worth preſerving. I allow, ſaid ſhe, 'that by depriving him of his hopes, you may put 'an end to his addreſſes; but conſider, my dear 'Lady Mary, what ſatisfaction they can afford 'you, if they are only the reſult of a fondneſs for 'your perſon, which would loſe all its charms for 'him, as ſoon as it became familiarized by poſſeſſion. You would then at once find yourſelf both 'neglected and deſpiſed by the man, for whoſe 'ſake you had rendered yourſelf truly deſpicable. 'I know you are incapable of an action that 'would at the ſame time rid you of his eſteem, 'and of the more valuable conſciouſneſs of knowing yourſelf to be truly eſtimable. I am not of 'the opinion of thoſe, who think chaſtity the only 'virtue of conſequence to our ſex; but it is certainly ſo very eſſential to us, that ſhe who violates it, ſeldom preſerves any other. And how 'ſhould ſhe? for if there are others as great, 'greater there cannot be, there is none ſo neceſſary. But herein I know you are of my opinion; I only therefore intreat you to ſhew Lord 'Robert that you are ſo; do not let him miſtake 'your real ſentiments; nor in order to preſerve 'his love, if cuſtom will oblige me to call his 'paſſion by that name, leave him reaſon to flatter himſelf

'himſelf that you will fall a victim to his arts,
'and your own weakneſs.

'Conſider with yourſelf, continued ſhe, which
'is moſt deſirable, his eſteem or his courtſhip? if
'you really love him, you can make no compari-
'ſon between them; for ſurely there cannot be a
'greater ſuffering than to ſtand low in the opinion
'of any perſon who has a great ſhare of our af-
'fections. If he neglects you, on finding that his
'criminal deſigns cannot ſucceed, he certainly
'does not deſerve your love, and the conſciouſ-
'neſs of having raiſed yourſelf in his opinion, and
'forced him to eſteem you, together with the
'pleaſure of reflecting that you have acted as you
'ought, will afford you conſolation.'

Theſe arguments had due weight with Lady Mary; ſhe determined to follow her friends advice, and ſubmit to the conſequences. Lady Sheerneſs had company that evening, and among the reſt Lord Robert. He was, as uſual, aſſiduous in his addreſſes to Lady Mary, who withdrawing to a little diſtance from the company, told him, that, 'ſhe
'had too long ſuffered his lordſhip to continue a
'courtſhip, which he had plainly acknowledged
'was made with ſuch views, as gave her great
'reaſon to blame herſelf, for ever having liſtened
'to it. She acknowledged, that the levity of her
'conduct had been ſuch, as leſſened her right to
'reproach him. Encouraged by her errors, and
'preſuming perhaps on a ſuppoſition, that he was
'not unpleaſing to her, he had ventured to inſult
'her in a flagrant manner; but without complain-
'ing of what was paſt, ſhe thought herſelf ob-
'liged to tell him his purſuit was in vain; that
'the errors in her conduct were the fault of edu-
'cation; nor might ſhe ſo ſoon have been con-

'vinced of them, if his behaviour had not awaken-
'ed her to a ſenſe of ſome impropriety in her own
'conduct, which, conſcious of the innocence of
'her intentions, ſhe had never ſuſpected: ſhe then
'told him, that if he did not entirely deſiſt from
'all addreſſes to her, ſhe ſhould be obliged to ac-
'quaint her aunt with his behaviour, who could
'not ſuffer ſuch an inſult on her niece to paſs un-
'reſented.'

As ſoon as ſhe had thus explained herſelf to Lord Robert, ſhe mingled with the croud, though with a mind little inclined to join in their converſation; but her young friend was there, and endeavoured to ſupport her ſpirits, which were overcome by the effort ſhe had made. This young lady ſoon after went into the country, and returned no more to London.

Lord Robert was ſo diſconcerted, that he left the room as ſoon as Lady Mary had thus given him his diſmiſſion. As their acquaintance lay much in the ſame ſet, they frequently ſaw each other. Lord Robert endeavoured to conquer Lady Mary's reſolution, by ſometimes exciting her jealouſy, and at others making her the object of his addreſſes; but ſhe continued ſteady in her conduct, though with many ſecret pangs. He began at laſt to converſe with her with greater eaſe to himſelf, as his paſſion abated when no longer nouriſhed by hope; and notwithſtanding a remainder of pique, he could not forbear treating her with a reſpect which her conduct deſerved; for he plainly ſaw ſhe had acted in contradiction to her own heart. This alteration in his behaviour afforded her great ſatisfaction; and though her love was not extinguiſhed, it ceaſed to be very painful, when ſhe was perſuaded ſhe had obtained ſome ſhare of his eſteem.

When

When Lady Mary was in her twentieth year, Lady Sheerneſs was ſeized with a lingering, but incurable diſorder. It made little alteration in her mind. In this melancholy ſituation ſhe applied to cards and company to keep up her ſpirits, as aſſiduouſly as ſhe had done during her better health. She was incapable indeed of going ſo much abroad, but her acquaintance, who ſtill found her houſe agreeable, applauded their charity in attending her at home. Cards even employed the morning, for fear any intermiſſion of viſitors ſhould leave her a moment's time for reflection. In this manner ſhe paſſed the ſhort remainder of her life, without one thought of that which was to come. Her acquaintance, for I cannot call them as they did themſelves, friends, were particularly careful to avoid every ſubject that might remind her of death. At night ſhe procured ſleep by laudanum; and from the time ſhe roſe, ſhe took care not to have leiſure to think; even at meals ſhe conſtantly engaged company, leſt her niece's converſation ſhould not prove ſufficient to diſſipate her thoughts. Every quack who propoſed curing what was incurable was applied to, and ſhe was buoyed up with ſucceſſive hopes of approaching relief.

She grew at laſt ſo weak, that unable even to perform her part at the card-table, Lady Mary was obliged to deal, hold her cards, and ſort them for her, while ſhe could juſt take them out one by one, and drop them on the table. Whiſt and quadrille became too laborious to her weakened intellects, but loo ſupplied their places, and continued her amuſement to the laſt, as reaſon or memory were not neceſſary qualifications to play at it.

Her acquaintance ſhe found at length begin to abſent themſelves, but ſhe re-animated their charity, by making frequent entertainments for them, and was reduced to order genteel ſuppers to enliven the evening, when ſhe herſelf was obliged to retire to her bed. Though it was for a conſiderable time doubtful whether ſhe ſhould live till morning, it was no damp to the ſpirits of any of the company from which ſhe had withdrawn, except to Lady Mary, who, with an aching heart, was obliged to preſide every evening at the table, and to ſhare their unfeeling mirth, till two or three o'clock in the morning.

She was greatly afflicted with the thought of her aunt's approaching death, whoſe indulgence to her, however blameable, had made a deep impreſſion on her heart; as this gave a more ſerious turn to her mind, ſhe could not ſee Lady Sheerneſs's great inſenſibility to what muſt happen after death without much concern. The great care that was taken to rob her of leiſure to reflect on matters of ſuch high importance ſhocked her extremely; and ſhe was diſguſted with the behaviour of thoſe ſhe called her friends, who ſhe plainly perceived would have fallen into a total neglect of her, had ſhe not found means to render her houſe more amuſing to them, than any into which they could enter. She now ſaw that friendſhip exiſted not without eſteem; and that pleaſurable connections would break at the time they were moſt wanted.

This courſe of life continued, till one evening Lady Sheerneſs was ſeized with a fainting fit at the card-table; and being carried to her bed, in half an hour departed to a world of which ſhe had never thought, and for which ſhe was totally unprepared.

As

As Lady Mary was not able to return to the company, they in decency, not in affliction, retired.

Having long expected this event, her grief was greater than her ſurprize. She ſent for the gentleman who ſhe knew was her aunt's executor, that her will might be opened, and neceſſary directions given for the funeral. Lady Mary had no doubt of ſucceeding to an eaſy fortune, and when the will was read it confirmed her in that ſuppoſition, by appointing her ſole heireſs. But the executor told her he feared ſhe would find no inheritance. The will was made on her firſt coming to Lady Sheerneſs, when there was ſome remains of the money her lord had left her; but he was well convinced, it had ſince been not only entirely expended, but conſiderable debts incurred.

This account was ſoon proved true, by the demands of numerous creditors. Lady Mary gave up all her aunt's effects, which fell ſhort of the debts, and remained herſelf in the ſame deſtitute condition from which Lady Sheerneſs had reſcued her. This was a very ſevere ſhock; ſhe had ſeen ſufficient proof of the little real friendſhip to be found in ſuch faſhionable connexions as ſhe had been engaged in, to know that ſhe had nothing to hope from any of her acquaintance. Her father had been at varience with moſt of his relations, and Lady Sheerneſs had kept up the quarrel. She had therefore little expectation of aſſiſtance from them, in the only wiſh ſhe could form, which was to obtain a penſion from the government, whereto her rank ſeemed to entitle her. She ſaw no reſource but in the pride of ſome inſolent woman, who would like to have a perſon of her quality dependant on her; a proſpect far worſe than death.

Or poſſibly, good-nature might procure her a reception among ſome of her acquaintance; but as ſhe had nothing even to anſwer her perſonal expences, how ſoon would they grow weary of ſo chargeable a viſitor?

While ſhe was oppreſſed with theſe reflexions, and had nothing before her eyes but the gloomy proſpect of extreme diſtreſs, ſhe received a meſſage from Lady Brumpton, who waited in her equipage at the door, deſiring to be admitted to ſee her, for Lady Mary had given a general order to be denied, being unfit to ſee company, and unwilling to be expoſed to the inſulting condolence of many, whoſe envy at the ſplendor in which ſhe had lived, and the more than common regard that had uſually been ſhewn her, would have come merely to enjoy the triumph they felt on her preſent humiliation.

Lady Brumpton was widow to Lady Mary's half brother. She had been a private gentlewoman of good family, but ſmall fortune; by marrying whom, her lord had given ſuch offence to his father, that he would never after admit him to his preſence. Lady Sheerneſs had ſhewn the ſame reſentment, and there no longer ſubſiſted any communication between the families. Lord Brumpton had been dead about three years, and left no children.

His widow was ſtill a fine woman. She was by nature generous and humane, her temper perfectly good; her underſtanding admirable. She had been educated with great care, was very accompliſhed, had read a great deal, and with excellent taſte; ſhe had great quickneſs of parts, and a very uncommon ſhare of wit. Her beauty firſt gained her much admiration; but when ſhe was better known, the charms of her underſtanding ſeemed to eclipſe

thoſe of her perſon. Her converſation was generally courted, her wit and learning were the perpetual ſubjects of panegyric in verſe and proſe, which unhappily ſerved to increaſe her only failing, vanity. She ſought to be admired for various merits. To recommend her perſon ſhe ſtudied dreſs, and went to a conſiderable expence in ornaments. To ſhew her taſte, ſhe diſtinguiſhed herſelf by the elegance of her houſe, furniture, and equipage. To prove her fondneſs for literature, ſhe collected a conſiderable library; and to ſhew that all her eſteem was not engroſſed by the learned dead, ſhe careſſed all living genius's; all were welcome to her houſe, from the ragged philoſopher, to the rhiming peer; but while ſhe only exchanged adulation with the latter, ſhe generouſly relieved the neceſſities of the former. She aimed at making her houſe a little academy; all the arts and ſciences were there diſcuſſed; and none dared to enter who did not think themſelves qualified to ſhine, and partake of the luſtre which was diffuſed round this aſſembly.

Though encircled by ſcience and flattery, Lady Mary's diſtreſs reached Lady Brumpton's ears, and brought her to that young lady's door, who was ſurprized at the unexpected viſit, but could not refuſe her admittance. Lady Brumpton began by apologizing for her intruſion, but excuſed herſelf on the great deſire ſhe had of being acquainted with ſo near a relation of her lord's, who, as ſhe was too young to have any ſhare in the unhappy diviſions in the family, ſhe was perſuaded was free from thoſe ill-grounded reſentments, which the malice and impertinence of tale-bearers are always watchful to improve; and when ſhe conſidered herſelf as the firſt occaſion of the quarrel, ſhe thought it her duty, in regard to her deceaſed lord's memory,

mory, to offer that protection his ſiſter might juſtly demand from her, and which her youth rendered neceſſary.

Lady Mary was charmed with the politeneſs of Lady Brumpton's addreſs, but ſtill more with the generoſity of her behaviour in ſeeking her out, at a time when ſo many were diligent to avoid her. The acknowledgments ſhe made for the favour done her, ſpoke as much in her recommendation as her perſon. Lady Brumpton after ſome converſation told her ſhe had a requeſt to make, to which ſhe could not well ſuffer a denial; this was no other than that, 'ſhe would leave that melancholy houſe, 'and make her's the place of her fixed abode; for 'as, by Lord Brumpton's will, he had bequeathed 'her his whole fortune, ſhe ſhould not enjoy it 'with peace of mind, if his ſiſter did not ſhare in 'the poſſeſſion.'

This very agreeable invitation filled Lady Mary with joy and ſurprize. She made a proper return to Lady Brumpton for her generoſity, and they agreed, that Lady Mary ſhould remove to her houſe the next day.

When Lady Mary was left alone to reflect on this unexpected piece of good fortune, and conſidered the diſtreſs ſhe had been in but two hours before, and from which ſhe was now ſo happily delivered; when ſhe reflected on the many calamities wherewith from her childhood ſhe had been threatened, and by what various means ſhe had been ſaved ſo often from ruin, ſhe could not forbear thinking that ſhe was indeed the care of that Being, who had hitherto employed ſo little of her thoughts. Such frequent mercies as ſhe had received, ſometimes in being preſerved from the fatal conſequences of her own follies, at others from

the unavoidable diſtreſſes to which ſhe had been expoſed, awakened in her mind a lively gratitude to the ſupreme Diſpoſer of all human events. The poor conſolations to which her aunt had been reduced in the melancholy concluſion of her life, ſhewed her, that happineſs did not conſiſt in diſſipation, nor in tumultuous pleaſures, and could alone be found in ſomething which every age and every condition might enjoy. Reaſon ſeemed this ſource of perpetual content, and ſhe fancied that alone would afford a ſatisfaction ſuitable to every ſtate of mind and body. Some degree of religion ſhe imagined neceſſary, and that to perform the duties it required was requiſite to our peace. But the extent of true religion ſhe had never conſidered, though her great good fortune told her, that ſhe ought to be thankful for the bleſſings conferred, and not diſtruſt the care of providence, of which ſhe had received ſuch ſignal proofs.

She had often heard Lady Brumpton ridiculed under the appellation of a genius, and a learned lady; but when ſhe recollected who thoſe perſons were, no other than the open profeſſors of folly, it did not prejudice that lady in her opinion, but rather raiſed her expectation of being introduced into a ſuperior race of beings, for whoſe converſation ſhe knew herſelf unqualified, but from whom ſhe hoped for ſome improvement to her underſtanding, too long neglected.

In this diſpoſition of mind Lady Brumpton found her at the hour that ſhe had appointed to fetch her. They went directly into Lady Brumpton's dreſſing room, who preſented Lady Mary with a ſettlement ſhe had prepared of a hundred pounds a year, which ſhe begged her to accept for her cloaths; and deſired, that whenever ſhe found it inſufficient,

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ſhe would draw on her for more: ſhe at the ſame time, made her the firſt payment.

Lady Mary now entered into a new ſet of company, frequently found herſelf entirely at a loſs; for ſhe was ſo totally unacquainted with the ſubjects of their diſcourſe, that ſhe underſtood them almoſt as little as if they had talked another language; ſhe told Lady Brumpton how much ſhe was concerned at her own ignorance, and begged ſhe would give her ſome directions what ſhe ſhould read. That Lady, whoſe chief aim was to ſhine, recommended to her the things moſt likely to fall into converſation, that ſhe might be qualified to bear her part in it. Lady Mary took her advice, and read ſome moral eſſays, juſt publiſhed; then a new play; after that the hiſtory of one ſhort period; and ended with a volume of ſermons then much in faſhion. When ſhe began to examine what ſhe had acquired by her ſtudies, ſhe found ſuch a confuſion in her memory, where an hiſtorical anecdote was crouded by a moral ſentiment; and a ſcrap of a play interwoven into a ſermon, that ſhe determined to diſcontinue that miſcellaneous reading, and begin a regular and improving courſe, leaving to others the privilege of ſetting in judgment on every new production.

In this ſituation Lady Mary continued ſome years, without any mortification, except what ſhe felt from ſeeing the conſequences of Lady Brumptons too great vanity. It led her into expences, which though they did not conſiderably impair her fortune, yet ſo far ſtraightened it, that ſhe frequently had not power to indulge the generoſity of her mind, where it would have done her honour, and have yielded her ſolid ſatisfaction. The adulation which ſhe received with too much viſible complacency,

complacency, inſpired her with ſuch an opinion of herſelf, as led her to diſpiſe thoſe of leſs ſhining qualities, and not to treat any with proper civility, whom ſhe had not ſome particular deſire to pleaſe, which often gave ſevere pangs to baſhful merit, and called her real ſuperiority in queſtion; for thoſe who obſerved ſo great a weakneſs, were tempted to believe her underſtanding rather glittering than ſolid. The deſire of attracting to her houſe every perſon who had gained a reputation for genius, occaſioned many to be admitted, whoſe acquaintance were a diſgrace to her, and who artfully taking advantage of her weakneſs, by exceſs of flattery, found means of impoſing on her to any degree they pleaſed.

The turn of converſation at her houſe was ridiculed in every other company, by people who appeared moſt deſirous of being in her parties. And indeed it was capable of being ſo; the extreme endeavour to ſhine, took off from that eaſe in converſation which is its greateſt charm. Every perſon was like a bent bow, ready to ſhoot forth an arrow; which had no ſooner darted to the other ſide of the room, than it fell to the ground, and the next perſon picked it up, and made a new ſhot with it. Like the briſk lightning in the Rehearſal, they gave flaſh for flaſh; and they were continually ſtriving whoſe wit ſhould go off with the greateſt report. Lady Mary, who has naturally a great deal of vivacity, and a ſufficient ſhare of wit, made no bad figure in the brilliant aſſembly; for though ſhe perceived an abſurdity in theſe mock ſkirmiſhes of genius, yet ſhe thought proper to conform to her company; but ſaw plainly that a ſprightly look, and lively elocution, made the

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chief merit of the beſt *bons mots* that were uttered among them.

After ſhe had ſpent about five years with Lady Brumpton, this lady was ſeized with a nervous fever, which all the art of her phyſicians could not entirely conquer. Her ſpirits were extremely affected, and her friends decreaſed in their attentions, as her vivacity decayed. She had indeed always been ſuperior to her company, in every requiſite to pleaſe and entertain, therefore when ſhe could not bear her part the converſation flagged; they dwindled from ſomething like wit into oddity, and then ſunk into dullneſs. She was no longer equally qualified to pleaſe or to be pleaſed; her mind was not at uniſon with ſhallow jeſters, and therefore they could make no harmony.

Her diſorder wore her extremely, and turned to an atrophy. In that gradual decay ſhe often told Lady Mary, 'ſhe was awakened from a dream of 'vanity; ſhe ſaw how much a deſire to gain the 'applauſe of a few people, had made her forget 'the more neceſſary aim of obtaining the approbation of her Creator. She had indeed no criminal actions to lay to her charge; but how 'ſhould ſhe? vanity preſerved her from doing 'any thing which ſhe imagined would expoſe her 'to cenſure. She had done ſome things commendable, but ſhe feared the deſire of being commended was part of her motive. The humility 'and calmneſs of a true chriſtian diſpoſition had 'appeared to her meanneſs of ſpirit or affectation, 'and a religious life as the extremeſt dullneſs; but 'now too late ſhe ſaw her error, and was ſenſible 'ſhe had never been in the path of happineſs. 'She had not erred from want of knowledge, but 'from the ſtrong impulſe of vanity, which led her

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'to neglect it; but ſickneſs, by lowering her ſpirits, 'had taken away the falſe glare which dazled her 'eyes, and reſtored her to her ſ[illegible]ht.'

Lady Brumpton was ſenſible of her approaching death ſome weeks before ſhe expired, and was perfectly reſigned. Lady Mary had a ſecond time the melancholy office of cloſing the eyes of a benefactreſs and relation whom ſhe ſincerely loved. Lady Brumpton, to remove from her any anxiety on her own account, acquainted her, as ſoon as her diſeaſe became deſperate, that ſhe had bequeathed her ten thouſand pounds, and all her plate and jewels.

Lady Mary found this information true, and received the ſum. She was tenderly concerned for the loſs of ſo good a friend; and by the various circumſtances of her life, and the many bleſſings beſtowed on her, had a heart ſo touched with the greatneſs of divine mercy, that her mind took a more ſerious turn than common; and tired of the multitude in which ſhe had ſo long lived, ſhe was ſeeking for a retirement, when ſhe met Mrs. Morgan and Mrs. Mancel at Tunbridge; and as I have already told you, came hither with them.

Mrs. Maynard was not a little wearied with ſo long a narrative, and therefore did not continue much longer with us; but Lamont and I remained in the park till dinner.

In the afternoon the Ladies propoſed we ſhould go upon the water, a ſcheme very agreeable to us all; ſome of the inhabitants of the other community were of the party. We got into a very neat boat, of a ſize ſufficient to contain a large company, and which was rowed by the ſervants of the family. We went about three miles up the river, with great pleaſure, and landed juſt by a

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neat houſe, where we underſtood we were to drink tea. The miſtreſs of it received us with great joy, and told the ladies ſhe had longed to ſee them, their young folks having quite finiſhed her houſe, which ſhe begged leave to ſhew us. Its extreme neatneſs rendered it an object worthy obſervation; and I was particularly attentive, as its ſize ſuiting my plan of life, I determined to copy it.

The rooms were neither large nor numerous, but moſt of them hung with paper, and prettily adorned. There were ſeveral very good drawings framed with ſhells, elegantly put together; and a couple of cabinets deſigned for uſe, but they became ornamental by being painted, and ſea-weeds ſtuck thereon, which by their variety, and the happy diſpoſition of them, rendered the doors, and each of the drawers, a diſtinct landſcape. Many other little pieces of furniture were by the ſame art made very pretty and curious. I learnt in a whiſper from Mrs. Maynard, that this gentlewoman was widow to the late miniſter of the pariſh, and was left at his death with five ſmall children, in very bad circumſtances. The ladies of Millenium Hall immediately raiſed her drooping ſpirits, ſettled an income upon her, took this houſe, furniſhed it, and lent her ſome of their girls to aſſiſt in making up the furniture, and decorating it, according to the good woman's taſte. She carried us into her little garden, that was neat to an exceſs, and filled with flowers, which we found ſome of her children tying up, and putting in order, while the younger were playing about, all dreſſed with the ſame exact neatneſs as herſelf.

When we had performed this little progreſs we found tea ready, and ſpent the afternoon with greater pleaſure, for obſerving the high gratification which

which this viſit ſeemed to afford the miſtreſs of the houſe. In the room where we ſat was a book-caſe well ſtocked; my curioſity was great to ſee what it contained, and one of the ladies, to whom I mentioned it, indulged me by opening it herſelf, and looking at ſome of the books, I found they conſiſted of ſome excellent treatiſes of divinity, ſeveral little things publiſhed for the uſe of children, and calculated to inſtill piety and knowledge into their infant minds, with a collection of our beſt periodical papers, for the amuſement of lighter hours. Moſt of theſe books, I found, were Mrs. Mancel's preſent.

The fineneſs of the evening made our return very delightful, and we had time for a little concert before ſupper.

The next morning I called up Lamont very early, and reminded the houſe-keeper of her promiſe of ſhewing us the ſchools; which ſhe readily performing, conducted us firſt to a very large cottage, or rather five or ſix cottages laid together. Here we found about fifty girls, clad in a very neat uniform, and perfectly clean, already ſeated at their reſpective buſineſſes. Some writing, others caſting accounts, ſome learning leſſons by heart, ſeveral employed in various ſorts of needle-work, a few ſpinning, and others knitting, with two ſchool-miſtreſſes to inſpect them. The ſchool-room was very large, and perfectly clean, the forms and chairs they ſat on were of wood, as white as poſſible; on ſhelves were wooden bowls and trenchers equally white, and ſhining pewter and braſs ſeemed the ornaments of one ſide of the room; while pieces of the children's work of various kinds decorated the other; little ſamples of their performances being thus exhibited as encouragement to their ingenuity.

I aſked many queſtions as to their education, and learnt, that they are bred up in the ſtricteſt piety; the ladies by various ſchemes, and many little compoſitions of their own, endeavour to inculcate the pureſt principles in their tender minds. They all by turns exerciſe themſelves in the ſeveral employments which we ſaw going forward, that they may have various means of gaining their ſubſiſtence, in caſe any accident ſhould deprive them of the power of purſuing any particular part of their buſineſs. The ladies watch their genius's with great care; and breed them up to thoſe things, which ſeem moſt ſuitable to the turn of their minds. When any are deſigned for ſervice, they are taught the buſineſs of the place they are beſt fitted for, by coming down to the hall, and performing the neceſſary offices under the direction of the excellent ſervants there.

A very large kitchen garden belongs to the houſe, which is divided into as many parts as there are ſcholars; to weed, and keep this in order, is made their principal recreation; and by the notice taken of it, they are taught to vye with each other which ſhall beſt acquit themſelves, ſo that perhaps never was a garden ſo neat. They likewiſe have no ſmall ſhare in keeping thoſe at the hall in order; and the grotto and ſeats are chiefly their workmanſhip.

I gave them due praiſe upon their performances at the clergyman's widow's, and delighted two of them very much by my admiration of a little arbour, which they had there planted with woodbines and other ſweet ſhrubs. In their own garden they are allowed the indulgence of any little whim which takes not up too much room; and it is pretty

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to ſee their little ſeats, their arbours and beds of flowers, according to their ſeveral taſtes. As ſoon as ſchool breaks up, they run with as much eagerneſs and joy to their garden, as other children do to their childiſh ſports; and their higheſt pleaſure is the approbation their patroneſſes give to their performances. They likewiſe take it by turns to do the buſineſs of the houſe, and emulation excites them to a cleanlineſs, which could not by any other means be preſerved.

From this ſchool we went to one inſtituted for boys, which conſiſted of about half the number, and moſt of them ſmall, as they are diſmiſſed to labour as ſoon as they are able to perform any work, except incapacitated by ill health. This is inſtituted on much the ſame principles as the other, and every boy of five years old has his little ſpade and rake, which he is taught to exerciſe.

We returned from our little tour time enough for prayers, with minds well prepared for them, by the view of ſuch noble fruits of real piety. Indeed the ſteward who reads them, does it with ſuch extreme propriety, and ſuch humble and ſincere devotion, as is alone ſufficient to fix the attention, and warm the hearts of his hearers.

After breakfaſt was over, we got Mrs. Maynard to accompany us into the garden, ſhe in complaiſance to us, abſtaining while we were at the hall, from her ſhare in the daily viſits the ladies pay to their ſeveral inſtitutions, and to the poor and ſick in their village. Their employments are great, but their days are proportionable; for they are always up by five o'clock, and by their example the people in the village riſe equally early; at that hour one ſees them all engaged

gaged in their ſeveral buſineſſes, with an aſſiduity, which in other places is not awakened till much later.

I called on Mrs. Maynard to continue her taſk, which without any previous ceremony ſhe did as follows.

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THE HISTORY OF Mrs. SELVYN.

MR. Selvyn, the younger brother of an ancient family, whoſe fortune was inferior to the rank it held in the country, where it had long been fixed, was placed in trade in London; but his ſucceſs not anſwering his hopes, he gave it up before it was too late to ſecure himſelf a ſmall ſubſiſtence, and retired into the country, when Miſs Selvyn was about five years old. His wife had been dead two years; thus his little girl's education devolved entirely on himſelf.

He bred her up genteely, though his fortune was ſmall, and as he was well qualified for the part, became himſelf her tutor, and executed that office ſo well, that at twelve years old ſhe excelled all the young ladies in the neighbourhood of her own age, in French, and writing, either for hand or ſtile; and in the great propriety and grace with which ſhe read Engliſh. She had no ſmall knowledge of accounts; and had made ſome progreſs

in the ſtudy of hiſtory. Her perſon was elegant and pleaſing, and her temper and manner perfectly engaging; but yet theſe charms could not induce the neighbouring families, to forgive her for excelling other girls in her accompliſhments.

They cenſured Mr. Selvyn, 'for giving his 'daughter an education, to which her fortune was 'ſo little ſuited, and thought he would have done 'better to have bred her up to houſewifery, and 'qualified her for the wife of an honeſt tradeſman;' for part of what he had was known to be a life income; a ſmall *fine cure* having been procured him by his friends in town, before he retired into the country.

The cenſures of thoſe who love to ſhew their own wiſdom by blaming others, had little effect on Mr. Selvyn; he continued his diligence in cultivating his little girl's mind; and even taught himſelf many things, that he might be able to inſtruct her. If he did not breed her up in a manner to gain a ſubſiſtence by the moſt uſual means, he however qualified her to ſubſiſt on little; he taught her true frugality without narrowneſs of mind; and made her ſee how few of all the expences the world ran into were neceſſary to happineſs. He deprived her of all temptation to purchaſe pleaſures, by inſtructing her to ſeek only in herſelf for them; and by the various accompliſhments he had given her, prevented that vanity of mind, which leads people to ſeek external amuſements. The day was not ſufficient for her employments, therefore ſhe could not be reduced to trifle away any part of it, for fear of its lying heavy on her hands.

Thus Miſs Selvyn was bred a philoſopher from her cradle; but was better inſtructed in the doctrine

triue of the ancient moraliſts, than in the principles of chriſtianity. Mr. Selvyn was not abſolutely a free-thinker; he had no vices that made him an enemy to chriſtianity; nor that pride which tempts people to contradict a religion generally received; he did not apprehend that diſbelief was a proof of wiſdom, nor wiſhed to leſſen the faith of others, but was in himſelf ſceptical; he doubted of what he could not entirely comprehend, and ſeemed to think thoſe things at leaſt improbable which were not level to his underſtanding. He avoided the ſubject with Miſs Selvyn, he could not teach her what he did not believe; but choſe to leave her free to form that judgment, which ſhould in time ſeem moſt rational to her.

I could not forbear interrupting Mrs. Maynard, to ſignify my approbation of Mr. Selvyn's conduct in this particular, as the only inſtance I had ever met with of a candid mind, in one who had a tendency towards infidelity; for 'I never knew 'any who were not angry with thoſe that believed 'more than themſelves, and who were not more 'eager to bring others over to their opinions than 'moſt foreign miſſionaries; yet ſurely nothing 'can be more abſurd, for theſe men will not dare 'to ſay that the virtues which chriſtianity requires 'are not indiſpenſible duties; on the contrary, 'they would have us imagine they are moſt ſincerely attached to them; what advantage then 'can accrue to any one, from being deprived of 'the certainty of a reward for his obedience? 'If we deny revelation, we muſt acknowledge 'this point to be very uncertain; it was the ſubject of diſpute and doubt among all the philoſophers of antiquity; and we have but a poor 'dependance for ſo great a bleſſing, if we reſt 'our expectation where they did theirs. Can a

'man therefore be rendered happier by being de-
'prived of this certainty? Or can we ſuppoſe he
'will be more virtuous, becauſe we have removed
'all the motives that ariſe from hope and fear?
'And yet, what elſe can excuſe an infidel's deſire
'to make converts? Nothing. Nor can any thing
'occaſion it but a ſecret conſciouſneſs that he is
'in the wrong, which temps him to wiſh for the
'countenance of more aſſociates in his error; this
'likewiſe can alone give riſe to his rancour againſt
'thoſe who believe more than himſelf; he feels
'them a tacit reproach to him, which to his pride
'is inſupportable.'

'But, ſaid Lamont, do you imagine that a
'free-thinker may not be certain of a future
'ſtate?'

'Not poſitively, anſwered Mrs. Maynard; if he
'is certain of that point, he is a believer without
'owning it; he muſt have had his certainty from
'Scripture; all the reaſon he boaſts can only ſhew
'it probable, and that probability is loaded with ſo
'many difficulties, as will much weaken hope.
'Where can reaſon ſay immortality ſhall ſtop?
'We muſt allow that Omnipotence may beſtow it
'on ſuch ranks of being as he pleaſes: But how
'can reaſon tell us to whom he has given it?
'Whether to all creation, or no part of it? Pride
'indeed makes man claim it for himſelf, but deny
'it to others; and yet the ſuperior intelligence
'perceivable in ſome brutes, to what appears in
'ſome of his own ſpecies, ſhould raiſe doubts in
'him who has nothing but the reaſonings of his
'own weak brain to go upon. But to proceed
'with my ſubject.'

The miniſter of the pariſh wherein Mr. Selvyn dwelt, was a gentleman of great learning and ſtrict probity. He had every virtue in the moſt amia-

amiable degree, and a gentleneſs and humility of mind which is the moſt agreeable characteriſtic of his profeſſion. He had a ſtrong ſenſe of the duties of his function, and dedicated his whole time to the performance of them. He did not think his inſtructions ſhould be confined to the pulpit; but ſenſible that the ignorant were much more effectually taught in familiar converſation, than by preaching; he viſited frequently the very pooreſt of his pariſhioners; and by the humility of his behaviour, as much as by his bounty (for he diſtributed great part of his income among the neceſſitous) he gained the affections of the people ſo entirely, that his advice was all-powerful with them.

This gentleman's great recreation was viſiting Mr. Selvyn, whoſe ſenſe and knowledge rendered his converſation extremely entertaining, and Miſs Selvyn's company was a great addition to the good miniſter's pleaſure; he took delight in ſeeing her, as Hamlet ſays, 'bear her faculties ſo meekly.' She was entirely void of conceit and vanity, and did not ſeem to have found out that her knowledge exceeded that of moſt perſons of her age, at leaſt ſhe looked upon it as a caſual advantage, which reflected no honour to herſelf, but was entirely owing to Mr. Selvyn. Her youthful chearfulneſs enlivened the party, without rendering the converſation leſs ſolid; and her amiable diſpoſition made the good miniſter particularly anxious for her welfare.

He ſoon found out Mr. Selvyn's ſcepticiſm, and endeavoured to remove it. He repreſented to him that, 'his not being able to underſtand the moſt 'myſterious parts of chriſtianity was no argument 'againſt the truth of them. That there were 'many things in nature, whoſe certainty he by no 'means doubted, and yet was totally ignorant of

'the methods whereby many of them operated,
'and even of the uſe of ſome of them. Could
'he ſay what purpoſe the fiery comet anſwers?
'How is its motion produced, ſo regular in its
'period, ſo unequal in its motion, and ſo ex-
'centric in its courſe? Of many other things man
'is in reality as ignorant, only being able to form
'a ſyſtem, which ſeems to ſuit in ſome particulars,
'he imagines he has diſcovered the whole, and
'will think ſo till ſome new ſyſtem takes place,
'and the old one is exploded. He aſked Mr.
'Selvyn, If they deſcended to the meaneſt objects,
'in what manner could they account for the poly-
'pus's property of ſupplying that part of its body
'which ſhall be cut away? That inſect alone, of
'all the creation, does not continue maimed by
'amputation, but multiplies by it. To what can
'we attribute this difference in an inſect, which in
'all particulars beſide, reſembles ſo many others?
'Yet who doubts of the reality of theſe things?
'If we cannot comprehend the ſmalleſt works of
'almighty wiſdom, can we expect to fathom that
'wiſdom itſelf? And ſay, that ſuch things he can-
'not do, or cannot chuſe, becauſe the ſame effects
'could be produced by other means? Man no
'doubt might exert the ſame functions under ano-
'ther form, why then has he this he now wears?
'Who will not reply, becauſe his Maker choſe it,
'and choſe it as ſeeing it beſt. Is not this the
'proper anſwer on all occaſions, when the decrees
'of the Almighty are diſcuſſed? Facts only are
'obvious to our reaſon; we muſt judge of them
'by the evidence of their reality; if that is ſuffi-
'cient to eſtabliſh the facts; why, or how they
'were produced, is beyond our comprehenſion.
'Let us learn that finite minds cannot judge of
'infinite wiſdom, and confine our reaſon within
'its

'its proper ſphere.' By theſe, and many other arguments, Mr. Selvyn was brought to believe the poſſibility of what he did not comprehend; and by this worthy clergyman's care, Miſs Selvyn was early taught the truths of chriſtianity, which though the moſt neceſſary of all things, was at firſt the only one neglected.

In this retired ſituation they continued till Miſs Selvyn was near ſeventeen years old; Mr. Selvyn then determined to remove to London; and taking a ſmall houſe in Park-ſtreet, fixed his abode there. Lady Emilia Reynolds lived next door; and ſoon after their arrival made them a viſit; a compliment ſhe ſaid, ſhe looked upon as due to ſo near a neighbour. Some other ladies in the ſame ſtreet followed her example, and in a very ſhort time Miſs Selvyn was introduced into as large an acquaintance as was agreeable to her, for ſhe was naturally averſe to much diſſipation.

Lady Emilia Reynolds was a ſingle lady of very large fortune, her age upwards of thirty, her perſon fine, her manner gentle and pleaſing, and an air of dejection did not render her countenance the leſs engaging. She was grave and ſenſible, and kept a great deal of good company, without entering into a gay way of life. Miſs Selvyn's modeſty and good ſenſe ſeemed to have great charms for her; ſhe cultivated a friendſhip with her, notwithſtanding ſome diſparity in their ages; and neither of them appeared ſo happy as when they were together.

Mr. Selvyn could not be diſpleaſed at an intimacy ſo deſirable; nor could Miſs Selvyn be more properly introduced into the world, than by a perſon of Lady Emilia's reſpectable character.

At her houſe Miſs Selvyn ſaw a great deal of good company, and was ſo generally liked, that many intreated Lady Emilia to bring her to them, whenever her ladyſhip favoured them with a viſit. Theſe invitations were generally complied with, as under ſuch a protectreſs Miſs Selvyn might properly venture to any place. Lady Sheerneſs was one of this number, whoſe rank, and ſome degree of relationſhip, brought acquainted with Lady Emilia, though the different turn of their minds, and their very oppoſite taſte of life, prevented any intimacy between them. Lady Emilia was not blind to Lady Sheerneſs's follies, but ſhe eſteemed them objects of her compaſſion, not of her cenſure; nicely circumſpect in her own conduct, ſhe judged with the extremeſt lenity of the behaviour of others, ready to attempt excuſing them to the world, and not even ſuffering herſelf to blame what ſhe could not approve; ſhe ſincerely pitied Lady Mary Jones, who ſeemed by fortune ſacrified to folly; and ſhe was in continual fear leſt ſhe ſhould fall a victim to that imprudence, which in her caſe was almoſt unavoidable.

By this means Miſs Selvyn became acquainted with Lady Mary, and was the young woman I before mentioned, as Lady Mary's adviſer and conductor, in putting an end to Lord Robert St. George's courtſhip.

Not long after ſhe had the ſatisfaction of thus aſſiſting a young lady, whoſe failings gave her almoſt as many charms as they robbed her of, ſhe had the misfortune to loſe Mr. Selvyn. All that a child could feel for the loſs of a tender parent Miſs Selvyn ſuffered. His death was not ſo ſudden, but that it afforded him time to ſettle his affairs, and to give every direction to Miſs Selvyn, which he thought might ſave her from all embaraſſment on the

the approaching event. He recommended to her, as her fortune would be but ſmall, to attach herſelf as much as poſſible to Lady Emilia, ſince ſhe now became ſtill more neceſſary as a protectreſs, than ſhe had before been deſirable as a friend, and that intereſt as much as gratitude required her cultivating the affection that Lady had already ſhewn her.

The latter motive was ſufficient to influence Miſs Selvyn, whoſe heart ſincerely returned the regard Lady Emilia had for her; but at that time ſhe was too much affected with Mr. Selvyn's approaching diſſolution to think of any thing elſe. His care for her in his laſt moments, ſtill more endeared him, who through life had made her happineſs his principal ſtudy. Her affliction was extreme, nor could Lady Emilia by the tendereſt care for ſome time afford her any conſolation.

Miſs Selvyn found herſelf heireſs to three thouſand pounds, a fortune which exceeded her expectation, though it was not ſufficient to ſuffer her to live in London with convenience. Lady Emilia invited her to her houſe; and as the ſpring advanced, her ladyſhip inclining to paſs the fine ſeaſon in the country, hired a houſe about a hundred miles from London, which ſhe had formerly been fond of, and was but juſt become empty. She had been but little out of town for ſome years, and went to her new habitation with pleaſure. Miſs Selvyn bid adieu without regret to every thing but Lady Mary Jones, for whom ſhe had conceived a real affection, which firſt took its riſe from compaſſion, and was ſtrengthened by the great docility with which ſhe followed her advice about Lord Robert, and the reſolution with which ſhe conquered her inclination. Lady Mary grieved to loſe one whom ſhe

eſteemed ſo prudent and faithful a friend, and conſidered her departure as a real misfortune; but they agreed to keep up a regular correſpondence as the beſt ſubſtitute to converſation.

The country was perfectly agreeable to Lady Emilia and her young friend. The life they led was moſt ſuitable to their inclinations, and winter brought with it no deſires to return to London; whereupon Lady Emilia diſpoſed of her houſe there, and ſettled quite in the country. They were both extremely fond of reading, and in this they ſpent moſt of their time. Their regular way of life, and the benefits of air and exerciſe, ſeemed to abate the dejection before ſo viſible in Lady Emilia; and ſhe never appeared to want any other converſation than that of Miſs Selvyn, whom ſhe loved with a tenderneſs ſo juſtly due to her merit.

After they had been ſettled about two years in the country, Lord Robert St. George, who was colonel of a regiment quartered in a town not far from them, came to examine into the ſtate of his regiment; and having at that time no other engagement, and the lodgings he had taken juſt out of the town being finely ſituated, he determined to make ſome ſtay there. Here he renewed his ſlight acquaintance with Lady Emilia and Miſs Selvyn; and by favour of his vicinity ſaw them often. Lord Robert's heart was too ſuſceptible of ſoft impreſſions, not to feel the influence of Miſs Selvyn's charms. He was ſtrongly captivated by her excellent underſtanding and engaging manner; as for her perſon, he had known many more beautiful, though none more pleaſing; but the uncommon turn of her mind, her gentleneſs, and ſenſible modeſty, had attractions that were irreſiſtible.

Lord

Lord Robert's attachment ſoon became viſible; but Miſs Selvyn knew him too well to think his addreſſes very flattering, and by his behaviour to Lady Mary Jones, feared ſome inſulting declaration; but from theſe apprehenſions he ſoon delivered her. Real affection conquering that aſſurance which nature had firſt given, and ſucceſs encreaſed, he had not courage to declare his paſſion to her, but applied to Lady Emilia, to acquaint her friend with his love, and begged her intereſt in his behalf, fearing that without it, Miſs Selvyn's reſerve would not ſuffer her to liſten to his addreſſes.

Lady Emilia promiſed to report all he had ſaid, and accordingly gave Miſs Selvyn a circumſtantial account of the whole converſation, wherein Lord Robert had laid before her the ſtate of his fortune, which was ſufficient for a woman of her prudence; and ſhe added, that 'ſhe did not ſee how Miſs 'Selvyn could expect to be addreſſed by a man 'more eligible, whether ſhe conſidered his birth, 'his fortune, or his perſon and accompliſhments.'

Miſs Selvyn was a little ſurprized, that ſo gay a man ſhould take ſo ſerious a reſolution. She allowed the juſtneſs of what Lady Emilia ſaid in his favour, and confeſſed, that it was impoſſible Lord Robert could fail of pleaſing; but added, that 'it 'could not be adviſable for her to marry; for en-'joying perfect content, ſhe had no benefit to ex-'pect from change; and happineſs was ſo ſcarce a 'commodity in this life, that whoever let it once 'ſlip, had little reaſon to expect to catch it again. 'For what reaſon then ſhould ſhe alter her ſtate? 'The ſame diſpoſition which would render Lord 'Robert's fortune ſufficient, made her's anſwer all 'her wiſhes, ſince if ſhe had not the joy of living

'with her ladyſhip, it would ſtill afford her every 'thing ſhe deſired.'

Lady Emelia ſaid ſome things in recommendation of marriage; and ſeemed to think it improbable Miſs Selvyn ſhould not be a little prejudiced in favour of ſo amiable a lover as Lord Robert, which tempted that young lady to tell her, that 'though 'ſhe allowed him exceſſively pleaſing, yet by ſome 'particulars, which formerly came to her know-'ledge, ſhe was convinced his principles were 'ſuch, as would not make her happy in a huſ-'band.'

Lady Emilia allowed the force of ſuch an objection, and did not preſs a marriage, for which ſhe had pleaded only out of an apprehenſion leſt Miſs Selvyn's reſerve might lead her to act contrary to her inclinations; and therefore ſhe had endeavoured to facilitate her declaration in favour of Lord Robert, if ſhe was in reality inclined to accept his propoſals. She acquieſced then readily in her friend's determination; only deſired ſhe would herſelf acquaint Lord Robert with it, as he would not eaſily be ſilenced by a refuſal which did not proceed from her own lips.

His lordſhip came in the evening to learn his fate, and Lady Emilia having contrived to be abſent, he found Miſs Selvyn alone. Though this was what he had wiſhed, yet he was ſo diſconcerted, that Miſs Selvyn was reduced to begin the ſubject herſelf, and to tell him, that 'Lady Emilia 'had acquainted her, with the honour he had done 'her, that ſhe was much obliged to him, for his good 'opinion, and hoped he would be happy with ſome 'woman much more deſerving than herſelf; but ſhe 'could by no means accept the favour he intended 'her, being ſo entirely happy in her preſent ſituation, 'that nothing in the world ſhould induce her to 'change it.'

This

This declaration gave riſe to a very warm conteſt; Lord Robert ſolliciting her to accept his love, with all the tenderneſs of the ſtrongeſt paſſion, and ſhe with equal perſeverance perſiſting in her refuſal. He could not be perſuaded, that her motive for doing ſo was really what ſhe alledged, but as ſhe continued to affirm it, he begged however to know, 'if ſhe had not made ſo ſtrange a 'reſolution in favour of a ſingle life, whether ſhe 'ſhould have had any particular objection to 'him?'

Miſs Selvyn ſhewed the uſeleſſneſs of this queſtion, ſince the reaſon of her refuſing the honour he intended her, would have made her reject the addreſſes of every other man in the world. Lord Robert could not believe this poſſible, and therefore deſiſted not from urging a queſtion ſo diſagreeable to anſwer.

When Miſs Selvyn found it impoſſible to avoid ſatisfying him in this particular, ſhe told him, that 'if he were entirely unexceptionable, ſhe ſhould 'be fixed in the ſame determination; but ſince he 'inſiſted on knowing if ſhe had any objection to 'him, ſhe was obliged to confeſs, that had ſhe 'been better inclined to enter into the matrimo-'nial ſtate, his lordſhip was not the man ſhe 'ſhould have choſen, not from any diſlike to his 'perſon or underſtanding, but from diſapproba-'tion of his principles; that, in regard to her ſex 'he had a lightneſs in his way of thinking, and 'had been ſo criminal in his conduct, that of all 'men ſhe knew, ſhe thought him moſt improper 'for an huſband.'

Lord Robert was ſurpriſed at ſo new an objection, and told her, that 'he did not apprehend 'himſelf more blamable in thoſe reſpects than moſt 'young men. Gallantry was ſuitable to his age,

'and

'and he never imagined, that any woman would 'have reproached him with his regard for her ſex, 'when he gave ſo ſtrong a proof of an inclination 'to leave them all for her.'

'I am ſorry, replied Miſs Selvyn, that your 'Lordſhip thinks me mean enough to take plea-'ſure in ſuch a triumph, or ſo vain as to imagine 'I can reform a man of diſſolute manners, the 'laſt thing I ſhould hope or endeavour to ſucceed 'in. Such a tincture of corruption will always 'remain in the mind of what you are pleaſed to 'term a gallant man, to whom I ſhould give the 'leſs polite appellation of vicious, that I could 'not be happy in his ſociety. A reformed rake 'may be ſober, but is never virtuous.'

Lord Robert growing very urgent to know what ſhe had particularly to lay to his charge; ſhe told him frankly, that 'his treatment of Lady Mary 'Jones had diſguſted her, as ſhe, and perhaps 'ſhe only, had been acquainted with the whole.'

Lord Robert endeavoured to excuſe himſelf on the encouragement Lady Mary's levity had given to his hopes; obſerving, that 'when a woman's 'behaviour was very light, his ſex were not apt 'to imagine there was any great fund of virtue; 'nor could it be expected, that any one elſe ſhould 'guard that honour, of which ſhe herſelf was 'careleſs.'

'I am ſure, replied Miſs Selvyn, your lordſhip's 'hopes muſt have been founded on Lady Mary's 'folly, not her real want of innocence; a folly 'which aroſe from the giddineſs of youth, and the 'hurry of diſſipation; for by nature Lady Mary's 'underſtanding is uncommonly good. By what 'you ſay, you imagined her honour was lawful 'prize, becauſe ſhe appeared careleſs of it; would 'this way of arguing be allowed in any other

'caſe;

'caſe? If you obſerved a man who neglected to 'lock up his money, and ſeemed totally indifferent what became of it, ſhould you think yourſelf thereby juſtified in robbing him? But how much more criminal would you be, were you to deprive him of his wealth, becauſe he was either ſo thoughtleſs or ſo weak, as not to know its value? And yet ſurely the injury in this caſe would be much leſs than what you think ſo juſtifiable. If the world has but the leaſt ſenſe of real honour, in this light they muſt ſee it; and to that tribunal I imagine you only think yourſelf anſwerable; for did you reflect but one moment, on another bar, before which you will be ſummoned, you would ſee, there can be no excuſe for violating the laws by which you are there to be tried. If you could juſtify yourſelf to the world, or to the women of whoſe folly you take advantage, by the fallacious arguments which you have ſo ready for that purpoſe, ſuch cobweb ſophiſtry cannot weaken the force of an expreſs command.'

'I will not pretend, anſwered Lord Robert, to deny the truth of what you ſay, but muſt beg you will conſider it is more eaſy for you to urge theſe truths, than for thoſe to obey them who are expoſed to, and ſuſceptible of temptations. When a woman has no title to our reſpect, how difficult is it to conſider her in the light you require! levity of conduct we are apt to look upon as an invitation, which a man ſcarcely thinks it conſiſtent with his politeneſs to neglect.'

'I wiſh, replied Miſs Selvyn, that women were better acquainted with the ways of thinking ſo common with your ſex; for while they are ignorant of them, they act to a great diſadvantage. They obtain by that levity which deprives them

'of

'of your eſteem, a degree of notice and pretended 'liking, which they miſtake for approbation; did 'they but know that you in your hearts deſpiſe 'thoſe moſt, to whom you are moſt aſſiduouſly 'and openly attached, it would occaſion a great 'change in their behaviour; nor would they ſuffer 'an addreſs, to which they cannot liſten without 'incurring your contempt. How criminally de-'ceitful is this behaviour? And what real virtue 'can a man truly boaſt, who acts in this manner? 'What woman in her ſenſes can enter into an union 'for life with ſuch a man?'

'Why not, madam? ſaid Lord Robert, my be-'haviour to you ſhews, that we yield to merit the 'homage it deſerves; you would loſe all your 'triumph, were we to put you and the lighter part 'of your ſex on an equality in our opinions. We 'are always ready to eſteem a woman who will 'give us leave to do ſo; and can you require us 'to reſpect thoſe who are not in the leaſt reſpect-'able?'

'No, anſwered Miſs Selvyn, I only wiſh you 'would ceaſe your endeavours to render thoſe wo-'men objects of contempt, who deſerve only to be 'neglected, and particularly not to deprive them 'of the very ſmall portion of regard they are en-'titled to, by the fallacious appearance of an at-'tachment of the tendereſt kind; which in reality 'ariſes from contempt, not love. But, added ſhe, 'I have ſaid more than I deſigned on the ſubject; 'I only meant to anſwer the queſtion you put to 'me with ſo much importunity; and muſt now 'confirm what I have already declared, by telling 'you, that were I inclined to marry, I would not 'on any account take an huſband of your lord-'ſhip's principles; but were you endowed with 'all the virtues that ever man poſſeſſed, I would

'not

'not change my preſent happy ſituation for the un-
'certainties of wedlock.'

When Lord Robert found all his ſollicitations unavailing, he left the country, and returned to London, where he hoped, by a ſeries of diverſions, to efface from his heart the real paſſion he had conceived for Miſs Selvyn; ſhe forbore informing Lady Mary Jones, though their correſpondence was frequent, of Lord Robert's courtſhip; ſhe did not doubt but her ladyſhip was ſincere, when ſhe aſſured her, ſhe now beheld him with the indifference he deſerved, but thought that to tell her ſhe had received ſo very different an addreſs from him, would bear too much the air of a triumph, a meanneſs which her heart abhorred.

Lady Emilia and Miſs Selvyn had lived ſeveral years in the country with great rational enjoyment, when the former was ſeized with a fever. All the ſkill of her phyſicians proved ineffectal, and her diſtemper encreaſed daily. She was ſenſible of the danger which threatened her life, but inſiſted on their telling her, if they had any great hopes of her recovery, aſſuring them, that it was of importance to her, to know their opinions with the utmoſt frankneſs. Thus urged, they confeſſed they had but little hopes. She then returned them thanks for their care, but ſtill more for their ſincerity; and with the greateſt compoſure took leave of them, deſiring to be left alone with Miſs Selvyn, who was in tears at her bed-ſide. Every one elſe withdrew, when taking Miſs Selvyn in her arms, and ſhedding a few ſilent tears, ſhe afterwards thus addreſſed her.

'At the moment that I muſt bid you a long
'farewel, you will know, that you have a mother
'in her whom you before thought only your
'friend. Yes, my deareſt Harriot, I am your
'mother

'mother, aſhamed of my weakneſs, and ſhocked 'at my guilt, while your gentle but virtuous eyes 'could reproach your unhappy parent, I could not 'prevail on myſelf to diſcover this ſecret to you, 'but I cannot carry to my grave, the knowledge 'of a circumſtance which concerns you. Yes, 'you are my daughter, my child, ever moſt dear 'to me, though the evidence and continual remem-'brancer of my crime.'

Miſs Selvyn imagined the diſtemper had now ſeized Lady Emilia's brain, which it had hitherto ſpared; and entreated her 'to compoſe herſelf, aſ-'ſuring her, that what ſo much agitated her decay-'ing frame, was only the phantom of an over-'heated imagination; for her parents were well 'known, neither was there any myſtery in her 'birth.'

'Oh! interrupted Lady Emilia, do not ſuſpect 'me of delirium; it has pleaſed the Almighty to 'ſpare my ſenſes throughout this ſevere diſorder, 'with a gracious deſign of allowing me even the 'laſt moments of my life to compleat my repent-'ance. What I tell you is but true, Mr. Selvyn 'knew it all, and like a man of honour ſaved me 'from ſhame, by concealing the fatal ſecret; and 'acted the part of a father to my Harriot, without 'having any ſhare in my guilt. But I ſee you do 'not yet believe me; take this, pulling a pa-'per from under her pillow, herein you will find 'an account of the whole unfortunate affair, 'written a year ago; left at the time of my death 'I ſhould not be able to relate it; this will prove, 'by the nice connexion of every circumſtance, 'that the words therein contained are not the ſug-'geſtions of madneſs.'

Miſs Selvyn accordingly read as follows,

'When

'When I was ſeventeen years old, Lord Peyton aſked me of my father, but not till after he had ſecured my tendereſt affections. His eſtate was ſufficient to content a parent who was not regardleſs of fortune and ſplendor; and his propoſals were accepted. But while the tedioufneſs of the lawyers made us wait for the finiſhing of ſettlements, Lord Peyton, who was in the army, was commanded to repair immediately to his regiment, then ſtationed in Ireland. He endeavoured to prevail with my father to haſten our marriage, offering every kind of ſecurity he could deſire, inſtead of the ſettlements ſo long delayed; my wiſhes concurred with his, rather than ſuffer him to go without me into a kingdom, which I imagined would not prove very amuſing to him. But my father, who was a very exact obſerver of forms, would not conſent to any expedient. No ſecurity appeared to him equivalent to ſettlements; and many trifling circumſtances requiſite to the ſplendor of our firſt appearance were not ready; which to him ſeemed almoſt as important, as the execution of the marriage writings.

'When Lord Peyton found my father inexorable, he attempted to perſuade me to agree to a private marriage; only deſiring, he ſaid, to ſecure me entirely his before he left the kingdom; and propoſed, that after his return, we ſhould be publickly married, to prevent my father's ſuſpecting that we had anticipated his conſent. But this I rejected; diſobedience to a parent, and other objections, were ſufficient to make me refuſe it; and we ſaw ourſelves reduced to ſeparate when we were ſo near being united. As Lord Peyton was an accepted lover, and our intended marriage was publickly known, and generally

'approved,

'approved, he paſſed great part of his time with 'me. My father was obliged to go out of town 'on particular buſineſs, the day before that ap-'pointed for Lord Peyton's departure. It is natu-'ral to ſuppoſe we paſſed it intirely together. The 'concern we were both under, made us wiſh to 'avoid being ſeen by others, and therefore I was 'denied to all viſitors. Lord Peyton dined and 'ſupped with me; and by thus appropriating the 'day to the ceremony of taking leave, we ren-'dered the approaching ſeparation more afflicting 'than in reaſon it ought to have been, and indeed 'made it a laſting affliction; a grief never to be 'waſhed away.

'Lord Peyton left London at the appointed 'hour, but the next days, and almoſt every ſuc-'ceeding poſt, brought me the tendereſt expreſſi-'ons of regret for this inforced abſence, and the 'ſtrongeſt aſſurances of the conſtancy of his af-'fection. Mine could not with truth be written 'in a more indifferent ſtrain, my love was the 'ſame, but my purpoſe was much altered; as ſoon 'as I had calmneſs of mind enough to reflect on 'what had paſſed, I reſolved never to be Lord 'Peyton's wife. I ſaw my own miſconduct in all 'its true colours. I deſpiſed myſelf, and could 'not hope for more partial treatment from my 'huſband. A lover might in the height of his 'paſſion excuſe my frailty, but when matrimony, 'and continued poſſeſſion had reſtored him to his 'reaſon, I was ſenſible he muſt think of me as I 'was conſcious I deſerved. What confidence, 'what eſteem could I hope from an huſband, who 'ſo well knew my weakneſs; or how could I 'ſupport being hourly expoſed to the ſight of a 'man, whoſe eyes would always ſeem to reproach 'me! I could ſcarcely bear to ſee myſelf; and I

'was

'was determined not to depend on any one who 'was equally conſcious of my guilt.

'I ſoon acquainted Lord Peyton with this re-'ſolution, which he combated with every argu-'ment love could dictate. He aſſured me in the 'moſt ſolemn manner of his entire eſteem, inſiſt-'ed that he only was to blame, and that he ſhould 'never forgive himſelf for the uneaſineſs he had 'already occaſioned me; but intreated me not to 'puniſh him ſo ſeverely, as ever again to give the 'leaſt intimation of a deſign not to confirm our 'marriage. As I reſiſted my own paſſion, it may 'be ſuppoſed that, although too late, I was able 'to reſiſt his. I ſaw that a generous man muſt 'act as he did, but no generoſity could reſtore me 'to the ſame place in his eſteem I before poſſeſſed. 'His behaviour on this occaſion, fixed my good 'opinion of him, but could not reſtore my opi-'nion of myſelf. All he could urge therefore was 'unavailing; the ſtronger my affection, the more 'determined I was in my purpoſe; ſince the more 'I valued his eſteem, the greater would my ſuffer-'ing be, at knowing that I had forfeited it. I 'acquainted my father with my reſolution, alledg-'ing the beſt excuſes I could make. He was at 'firſt angry with my inconſtancy, charged me with 'capriciouſneſs, and want of honour; but at laſt 'was pacified, by my aſſuring him I would never 'marry any man. As he had been ſorry to part 'with me, the thought of my continuing with him 'as long as he lived, made my peace.

'Lord Peyton's impatience at being detained in 'Ireland, increaſed with his deſire of perſuading 'me to relinquiſh a deſign ſo very grievous to my 'own heart, as well as to his; but he could not 'obtain leave to return into England, before I

'found

'found, to my inexpreſſible terror, that the miſ-
'fortune I ſo ſincerely lamented, would have con-
'ſequences that I little expected. In the agony of
'my mind I communicated my diſtreſs to Lord
'Peyton, the only perſon whom I dared truſt with
'ſo important a ſecret.

'Inſtead of condoling with me on the ſubject of
'my affliction, he expreſſed no ſmall joy in a cir-
'cumſtance, which he ſaid muſt reduce me to ac-
'cept the only means of preſerving my reputation;
'and added, that as every delay was now of ſo
'much importance, if the next packet did not bring
'him leave of abſence, he ſhould ſet out without
'it; and rather run the hazard of being called to
'account for diſobedience, than of expoſing me to
'one painful bluſh.

'I confeſs his delicacy charmed me; every letter
'I received increaſed my eſteem and affection for
'him, but nothing could alter my purpoſe. I
'looked upon the execution of it as the only means
'of re-inſtating myſelf in *his* good opinion, or my
'*own*, in compariſon of which even reputation
'ſeemed to loſe its value. But ſevere was the
'trial I had to undergo upon his return into Eng-
'land, which was in a few days after his aſſurance
'of coming at any hazard. He uſed every means
'that the tendereſt affection and the niceſt honour
'could ſuggeſt, to perſuade me to marry him; and
'the conflict in my own heart very near reduced
'me to my grave; till at length pitying the con-
'dition into which I was reduced, without the
'leaſt approach to a change of purpoſe, he pro-
'miſed to ſpare me any farther ſollicitation, and to
'bury his affliction in ſilence; after obtaining a
'promiſe from me, that I would ſuffer him to
'contrive the means for concealing an event,

'which

'which muſt ſoon happen; as my unintriguing 'ſpirit made me very incapable of managing it 'with tolerable art and ſecrecy.

'Lord Peyton had maintained his former friend-'ſhip with my father, who thought himſelf obliged 'to him, for not reſenting my behaviour in the 'manner he imagined it deſerved. When the me-'lancholy and much dreaded time approached, 'Lord Peyton gave me ſecret information that he 'would invite my father into the country, on pre-'tence of aſſiſting him by his advice in ſome al-'terations he was going to make there; and aſſu-'red me of careful attendance, and the moſt ſe-'cret reception, from a very worthy couple, to 'whoſe houſe he gave me a direction, if I could 'contrive, under colour of ſome intended viſit, 'to leave my own.

'All was executed as he had planned it; and 'when my ſervants thought I was gone to viſit a 'relation ſome miles diſtant from London, I went 'as directed, and was received with the greateſt 'humanity imaginable by Mr. and Mrs. Selvyn; 'not at their own houſe, but at one taken for that 'purpoſe, where the affair might be more ſecretly 'managed. Lord Peyton had concealed my name 'even from them; and ſecured their care of me 'under a borrowed appellation.

'The day after I got to them I was delivered of 'you, my deareſt child, whom I beheld with ſor-'row as well as affliction; conſidering you as the 'melancholy memorial and partner in my ſhame.

'Mr. and Mrs. Selvyn attended me with the 'greateſt care, and were never both abſent at a 'time; they acquainted Lord Peyton with the 'ſtate of my health by every poſt; and I was en-'abled, by the neceſſity of the caſe, to write to

'my

'my father as frequently as I uſually did, when 'abſent from him. Within the fortnight from 'the time of my departure from my own houſe 'I returned to it again, after delivering my dear 'Harriot into the care of theſe good people, who 'promiſed to treat her as their own child. Un-'der pretence of a cold I confined myſelf till I 'was perfectly recovered.

'Lord Peyton detained my father till he heard 'I was entirely well; and then went with impa-'tience to ſee his little daughter, over whom he 'ſhed many tears, as Mr. Selvyn afterwards in-'formed me; telling it that it was a conſtant 'memorial of the greateſt misfortune of his life, 'and could never afford him a pleaſure that was 'not mingled with the deepeſt affliction.

'Mrs. Selvyn had lain in about ſix weeks before 'I went to her, the child ſhe brought into the 'world lived but a few months; upon its death, 'at Lord Peyton's deſire, they took you from 'nurſe, and pretending you their own, privately 'buried their child, who was likewiſe nurſed 'abroad. Mr. Selvyn was a merchant, but had 'never been ſucceſsful, his wife died when you 'were about three years old. Having no children 'to provide for, and not being fond of trade, he 'was deſirous of retiring into the country. Lord 'Peyton to facilitate the gratification of his wiſh, 'procured him a ſmall *fine cure*; gave into his poſ-'ſeſſion three thouſand pounds, which he ſecured 'to you; and allowed him an hundred a year for 'the trouble of your education; with an unlimited 'commiſſion to call on him for any ſums he ſhould 'want.

'The conſtant ſenſe of my guilt, the continual 'regret at having by my own ill conduct forfeited

'the

'the happineſs, which every action of Lord Peyton's proved that his wife might reaſonably expect, fixed a degree of melancholy on my mind, which no time has been able to conquer. I lived with my father till his death, which happened not many years ago; at his deceaſe, I found myſelf miſtreſs of a large fortune, which enabled me to ſupport the rank I had always enjoyed. Though Lord Peyton had provided ſufficiently for Mr. Selvyn's and our convenience, yet I conſtantly ſent him a yearly preſent; till no longer able to deny myſelf the pleaſure of ſeeing my dear child, I prevailed on him to remove to London, and to fix in the ſame ſtreet with me, taking care to ſupply all that was requiſite to enable him to appear there genteelly. You know with what appearance of accident I firſt cultivated a friendſhip with you, but you cannot imagine, with how much difficulty I concealed the tenderneſs of a mother under the ceremonies of an acquaintance.

'Of late I have enjoyed a more eaſy ſtate of mind: I have ſometimes been inclined to flatter myſelf, that your uncommon merit, and the great comfort I have received in your ſociety, are ſigns that Heaven has forgiven my offence, and accepted my penitence, which has been ſincere and long, as an atonement for my crime; in which bleſſed hope I ſhall, I truſt, meet death without terror, and ſubmit, my dear daughter, whenever I am called hence, in full confidence to that Power, whoſe mercy is over all his works. I ought to add a few words about your dear father, who ſeemed to think my extreme regular conduct, and the puniſhment I had inflicted on myſelf, ſuch an extenuation of my weakneſs, that he ever behaved to me with the tendereſt

'reſpect, I might almoſt ſay reverence, and till 'his death gave me every proof of the pureſt and 'the ſtrongeſt friendſhip. By conſent we avoided 'each others preſence for three years, by which 'time we hoped the violence of our mutual paſſion 'would be abated. He ſpent the greateſt part of 'it abroad; and at the end of that period we met 'with the ſincerer joy, from finding we were not 'deceived in our hopes. Our attachment was 'ſettled into the tendereſt friendſhip; we forbore 'even the mention of your name, as it muſt have 'reminded us of our crime; and if Lord Peyton 'wanted to communicate any thing concerning 'you, he did it by letter; avoiding with the ex-'tremeſt delicacy ever to take notice, that any 'ſuch letters had paſſed between us; and even in 'them he conſulted about his child, in the ſtile of 'a man who was writing to a perſon that had no 'other connexion with it than what her friendſhip 'for him muſt naturally occaſion, in a point where 'he was intereſted by the tendereſt ties of the moſt 'extreme paternal love.

'I have often with pleaſure heard you mention 'his great fondneſs for you in your childhood, when 'he viſited at your father's; your growing years 'encreaſed it, though it obliged him to ſuppreſs 'the appearance of an affection which you would 'have thought improper. I need not tell you, that 'I had the misfortune to loſe this worthieſt of 'friends, about half a year before you came to 'London, which determined me to ſend for you, 'that I might receive all the conſolation the world 'could give me, and ſee the inheritor of her dear 'father's virtues. While he lived I dared not have 'taken the ſame ſtep; your preſence would have 'been too painful a teſtimony againſt me, and 'continually reminded my lord of a weakneſs,

'which

'which I hope time had almoſt effaced from his re-
'membrance.'

Miſs Selvyn was extremely affected with the peruſal of this paper; ſhe was frequently interrupted by her tears; grieved to the heart to think of how much uneaſineſs ſhe had been the cauſe. As ſoon as ſhe had concluded it, ſhe threw herſelf on her knees at Lady Emilia's bed-ſide, and taking one of her hands, which ſhe bathed with her tears, 'Is it poſſible then, ſaid ſhe, that I have 'thus long been ignorant of the beſt of parents? 'And muſt I loſe you when ſo lately found? Oh! 'my dear mother, how much pleaſure have I loſt 'by not knowing that I might call you by that 'endearing name! What an example of virtue 'have you ſet me! How noble your reſolution! 'How uniform and conſtant your penitence! Bleſt 'you muſt be ſupremely by him who loveth the 'contrite heart; and you and my father I doubt 'not will enjoy eternal felicity together, united 'never more to part. Oh! may your afflicted 'daughter be received into the ſame place, and 'partake of your happineſs; may ſhe behold your 'piety rewarded, and admire in you the bleſſed 'fruits of timely repentance; a repentance ſo im-'mediately ſucceeding the offence, that your 'ſoul could not have received the black im-'preſſion!'

'Can you, who have never erred, ſaid Lady 'Emilia, ſee my offence in ſo fair a light? What 'may I not then hope from infinite mercy? I do hope; 'it would be criminal to doubt, when ſuch conſo-'latory promiſes appear in almoſt every page of 'holy writ. With pleaſure I go where I am call-'ed, for I leave my child ſafe in the Divine Pro-'tection, and her own virtue; I leave her, I hope, 'to a happy life, and a far more happy death;

'when joys immortal will bleſs her through all 'eternity. I have now my love diſcharged the 'burden from my mind; not many hours of life 'remain, let me not paſs them in careſſing my 'dear daughter, which, though moſt pleaſing to my 'fond heart, can end only in making me regret 'the loſs of a world which will ſoon paſs from 'my ſight. Let me ſpend this hour, as I hope to do 'thoſe that will ſucceed it through all eternity. 'Join with me in prayers to, and praiſes of him, 'in whom conſiſts all our laſting happineſs.'

Miſs Selvyn ſent for the Miniſter of the pariſh, at Lady Emelia's deſire, and the remainder of her life paſſed in religious exerciſes. She expired without a groan, in the midſt of a fervent prayer, as if her ſoul was impatient to take its flight into the preſence of him, whom ſhe was addreſſing with ſo much ardour.

Miſs Selvyn's affliction was at firſt extreme, but when ſhe reflected on her mother's well-ſpent life, and moſt happy death, it much abated the exceſs of her grief. By that lady's will, ſhe found herſelf heir to twelve thouſand pounds, and all her perſonal eſtate. She had been charmed with the account Lady Mary Jones had ſent her of this ſociety, and wiſhed to increaſe her acquaintance with that lady, and therefore offered, if proper, to make her a ſhort viſit, as ſoon as her neceſſary affairs were ſettled. This met with the moſt welcome reception, and ſhe came hither as a viſitor. Her ſtay was gradually prolonged for near two months; when having reaſon, from the great regard ſhewn her, to think ſhe ſhould be no diſagreeable addition, ſhe aſked leave to join her fortune to the common ſtock, and to fix intirely with them. Nothing could be more agreeable to the other three ladies than this offer, and with extream ſatisfaction ſhe ſettled here.

Upon

Upon this increaſe of income it was that my friends eſtabliſhed the community of indigent gentlewomen, which gave you ſo much pleaſure.

Lamont was much ſtruck with the conduct of Lady Emilia; ſhe had ſhewn, he ſaid, a degree of delicacy and prudence, which exceeded what he had a notion of; he never met with a woman who foreſaw the little chance ſhe had for happineſs, in marrying a man who could have no inducement to make her his wife, but a nice, often a too nice, ſenſe of honour; and who certainly could have no great opinion of her virtue. The folly of both men and women in theſe late unions was the ſubject of our converſation till we ſeparated.

In the afternoon the ladies aſked us to accompany them to the houſe they had juſt taken for the new community, to which they were obliged to go that day, as they had ſet ſeveral perſons to work there. They keep a poſt-coach and poſt-chaiſe, which with the help of our's, were ſufficient to accommodate us all. A ſhort time brought us to the houſe, a very old, and formerly a very fine manſion, but now much fallen to decay. The outſide is greatly out of repair, but the building ſeems ſtrong. The inſide is in a manner totally unfurniſhed; for though it is not empty, yet the rats and mice have made ſuch conſiderable depredations on what time had before reduced to a very tattered condition, that the melancholy remains can be reckoned little better than lumber.

The laſt inhabitant of this houſe we were informed was an old miſer, whoſe paſſion for accumulating wealth, reduced him into almoſt as unfortunate a ſtate as Midas, who, according to the fable, having obtained the long deſired power of turning every thing he touched to gold, was ſtarved by the immediate tranſmutation of all food into

that metal, the inſtant it touched his lips. The late poſſeſſor of the houſe I am ſpeaking of, when he was about fifty years old, turned away every ſervant but an old woman, who if ſhe was not honeſt, was at leaſt too weak to be able to put any diſhoneſty in practiſe. When he was about threeſcore, ſhe died, and he never could venture to let any one ſupply her place. He fortified every door and window with ſuch bars of iron, that his houſe might have reſiſted the forcible attack of a whole army. Night and day growled before his inhoſpitable door a furious Dutch maſtiff, whoſe natural ferocity was ſo increaſed by continual hunger, for his maſter fed him moſt ſparingly, that no ſtranger could have entered the yard with impunity.

Every time this churliſh beaſt barked, the old gentleman, with terror and diſmay in his countenance, and quaking limbs, ran to the only window he ever ventured to unbar, to ſee what danger threatened him; nor could the ſight of a barefoot child, or a decrepid old woman, immediately diſpel his fears. As timorous as Falſtaff, his imagination firſt multiplied, and then cloathed them in buckram; and his panic ceaſed not till they were out of view.

This wretched man upon the death of his only ſervant, agreed with an old woman to buy food for him, and bring it to the well defended door of his yard; where informing him of her arrival, by a ſignal agreed upon between them, he ventured out of his houſe to receive it from her; and dreſſed it himſelf; till worn out by anxiety of mind he grew too weak to perform that office, and ordered the woman to bring it ready prepared; this continued for a little time, till at laſt he appeared no more at his

his gate. After the old woman had knocked three days in vain, the neighbourhood began to think it neceſſary to take ſome meaſures thereupon; but not chuſing to run the hazard of breaking open the houſe, they ſent to the old gentleman's nephew, whoſe father had been ſuffered to languiſh in extreme poverty many years before his death; nor was the ſon in much better condition; but he had acquainted ſome of the neighbours with the place of his abode, in hopes of the event which now induced them to ſend for him.

As ſoon as he arrived, he prepared to force his way into the houſe, but it was found ſo impracticable, that at length they were obliged to untile part of the roof, from whence a perſon deſcended, and opened the door to thoſe who did not chuſe ſo dangerous an entrance, as that through which he had paſſed.

They found the old man dead on a great cheſt which contained his money, as if he had been deſirous to take poſſeſſion even in death.

His nephew was juſt of age, and having till then been expoſed to all the evils of poverty, was almoſt diſtracted with joy at the ſudden acquiſition of a large fortune. He ſcarcely could be prevailed with to ſtay long enough in this houſe to pay the laſt duties to an uncle, who had no right to any thing more from him than juſt the decent ceremonies; and without giving himſelf time to look over his eſtate, haſtened to London.

He hired a magnificent houſe in Groſvenor-Square; beſpoke the moſt elegant equipages; bought the fineſt ſet of horſes he could hear of, at double their real value; and launched into every expence the town afforded him. He ſoon became one of the moſt conſtant frequenters of Whites;

kept ſeveral running horſes; diſtinguiſhed himſelf at Newmarket, and had the honour of playing deeper, and betting with more ſpirit, than any other young man of his age. There was not an occurrence in his life about which he had not ſome wager depending. The wind could not change, or a ſhower fall without his either loſing or gaining by it. He had not a dog or cat in his houſe on whoſe life he had not bought or ſold an annuity. By theſe ingenious methods in one year was circulated through the kingdom, the ready money which his uncle had been half his life ſtarving himſelf and family to accumulate. The ſecond year obliged him to mortgage great part of his land, and the third ſaw him reduced to ſell a conſiderable portion of his eſtate, of which this houſe, and the land belonging to it made a part.

I could not help obſerving the various fate of this manſion, originally the ſeat of ancient hoſpitality; then falling into the hands of a miſer, who had not ſpirit to enjoy it, nor ſenſe enough to ſee, that he was impairing ſo valuable a part of his poſſeſſions, by grudging the neceſſary expences of repairs; from him devolving to a young coxcomb, who by neglect let it ſink into ruin, and was ſpending in extravagance, what he inherited from avarice; as if one vice was to pay the debt to ſociety which the other had incurred; and now it was purchaſed to be the ſeat of charity and benevolence. How directly were we led to admire the ſuperior ſenſe, as well as tranſcendent virtue of theſe ladies, when we compared the uſe they made of money, with that to which the two late poſſeſſors had appropriated it! While we were in doubt which moſt to blame, he who had heaped it up without comfort, in ſordid inhumanity; or he who ſquandered it in the gratification of gayer vices. Equal-

ly

ly ſtrangers to beneficence, ſelf-indulgence was their ſole view; alike criminal, though not equally unfaſhionable, one endeavoured to ſtarve, the other to corrupt mankind; while the new owners of this houſe had no other view, than to convenience, and to reform all who came within their influence, themſelves enjoying in a ſupreme degree, the happineſs they diſperſed around them.

It was pleaſing to ſee numbers at work to repair the building, and cultivate the garden, and to obſerve, that at length from this inhoſpitable manſion "Health to himſelf, and to his children bread, the "labourer bears." Within it were all the biggeſt ſchool girls, with one of their miſtreſſes to direct them in mending ſuch furniture as were not quite deſtroyed; and I was pleaſed to ſee with how much art they repaired the decays of time, in things which well deſerved better care, having once been the richeſt part of the furniture belonging to the opulent poſſeſſors.

In our way home we called at a clergyman's houſe, which was placed in the fineſt ſituation imaginable, and where we beheld that profuſion of comforts, which ſenſe and œconomy will enable the poſſeſſors of narrow fortunes to enjoy. This gentleman and his wife have but a ſmall living, and ſtill leſs paternal eſtate; but the neatneſs, prettineſs, and convenience of their habitation, were enough to put one out of humour with riches, and I ſhould certainly have breathed forth Agar's prayer with great ardour, if I had not been ſtopped in the beginning, by conſidering how great a bleſſing wealth may be when properly employed, of which I had then ſuch hourly proof.

At our return to Millenium-Hall we found ſome of the neighbouring ſociety, who were come to ſhare the evening's concert, and ſup with us.

But at ten o'clock they departed; which I underſtood was ſomewhat later than uſual, but they conformed to the alteration of hours our arrival had occaſioned.

The next day being very hot, we were aſked to breakfaſt in a delightful arbour in the Flower garden. The morning dew, which ſtill refreſhed the flowers, increaſed their fragrance to as great an exceſs of ſweetneſs as the ſenſes could ſupport. Till I went to this houſe, I knew not half the charms of the country. Few people have the art of making the moſt of nature's bounty; theſe ladies are epicures in rural pleaſures, and enjoy them in the utmoſt exceſs to which they can be carried. All that romance ever repreſented in the plains of Arcadia, are much inferior to the charms of Millenium-Hall, except the want of ſhepherds be judged a deficiency, that nothing elſe can compenſate; there indeed they fall ſhort of what romantic writers repreſent, and have formed a female Arcadia.

After breakfaſt all the ladies left us except Mrs. Maynard. We were ſo charmed with the ſpot we were in, that we agreed to remain there, and I called on my couſin to continue the taſk ſhe had undertaken; which ſhe did in the following manner.

THE

HISTORY

OF

Mrs. TRENTHAM.

MRS. Trentham never knew the bleſſing of a mother's care, her's died the ſame month which gave her daughter birth; and Mr. Trentham ſurvived his wife but eight years. He left his little girl eleven thouſand pounds, recommending both her perſon and fortune to his Mother Mrs. Alworth.

Mrs. Alworth was an old lady of good ſenſe and merit. She had felt the moſt melancholy, but not unuſual effect of long life, having outlived all her children. This misfortune ſhe alleviated in the beſt manner ſhe was able, by receiving her grandchildren into her family. Her ſon by her ſecond huſband left behind him a boy and girl, the former at the time I ſpeak of, about eleven years old, the latter ten. Her daughter had married Mr. Denham, and at her death left two girls. Mr. Denham entering into wedlock a ſecond time,

very willingly complied with Mrs. Alworth's deſire of having his two daughters. The eldeſt of theſe was twelve years old, the youngeſt eleven.

Theſe children had lived with the old lady ſome years, when ſhe took home Harriot Trentham. As their grand-mother was rich, there had been a ſtrong contention among them for her favour, and they could not without great diſguſt ſee another rival brought to the houſe. Harriot was extremely handſome and engaging. The natural ſweetneſs of her temper rendered her complying and obſervant; but having been bred under the care of a ſenſible and indulgent father, ſhe had never been taught the little arts of behaviour, which mothers too commonly inculcate with ſo much care, that children are as void of ſimplicity at eight, as at eight and twenty years old. The firſt thing a girl is taught is to hide her ſentiments, to contradict the thoughts of her heart, and tell all the civil lies which cuſtom has ſanctified, with as much affectation and conceit as her mother; and when ſhe has acquired all the folly and impertinence of a riper age, and apes the woman more ungracefully than a monkey does a fine gentleman, the parents congratulate themſelves with the extremeſt complacency, on the charming education they have given their daughter.

Harriot had been taught no ſuch leſſons. Her Father had a ſtrong diſlike to prematurity, and feared that communication with the world would too ſoon teach her art and diſguiſe, the laſt things he would have choſen to anticipate.

By teaching her humanity, he initiated her into civility of manners. She had learnt, that to give pain was immoral; and could no more have borne to have ſhocked any perſon's mind, than to have racked his body. Any thought therefore that could

could hurt ſhe ſuppreſſed as an indiſpenſable duty, and to pleaſe by her actions, and not offend by her words, was an eſſential part of the religion in which ſhe was educated; but in every thing whereby no one could ſuffer, ſhe was innocence and ſimplicity itſelf; and in her nature ſhone pure and uncorrupted, either by natural or acquired vices.

Mrs. Alworth, though fond of all her grand-children, could not conquer a degree of partiality for Harriot, whoſe attractions, both perſonal and mental, were very ſuperior to thoſe of her couſins. Her beauty ſecured her the particular attention of all ſtrangers, ſhe gained their favour at firſt ſight, and ſecured it by her amiable diſpoſition when they became more acquainted with her.

Envy is one of the firſt paſſions that appears in the human mind. Had Miſs Alworth and Miſs Denhams been much younger, Harriot would not have paſſed unenvied. Every day increaſed their diſlike to her, as ſhe grew daily more beloved by others, and they let no opportunity eſcape of making her feel the effects of their little malice. Their hatred to her produced an union among themſelves; for the firſt time they found ſomething in which they all agreed. They were continually laying little plots to leſſen her in their grand-mother's opinion; frequent were the accuſations againſt her, but her innocence always triumphed, though it never diſcouraged them from repeating the ſame unſucceſsful attempts. Mrs. Alworth was extremely fond of them all, but yet ſhe ſaw through their malice, and their behaviour only ſerved to endear Harriot the more, who defended herſelf without anger, and retained no rancour in her mind. Free from reſentment or ſuſpicion ſhe was ever open to their arts, and experience did not teach her to be on her guard

guard againſt them, which often occaſioned their having appearances on their ſide, and might have raiſed prejudices againſt her in Mrs. Alworth's mind, had ſhe not found a defender in Maſter Alworth, who alone of all her couſins was free from envy. He was naturally of an honeſt and ſweet diſpoſition, and being fond of Harriot, for beauty has charms for all ages, felt great indignation at the treatment ſhe received, and would often expreſs a reſentment from which ſhe was wholly free.

Mrs. Alworth's great fondneſs for her grandſon, and ſtrong prejudices againſt ſchools, from a belief that boys acquire there more vice than learning, had determined on a private education. She therefore provided a tutor for him before he was ſeven years old; a man of learning and ſenſe, with a great deal of religion and good humour; and who was very attentive to the employment for which he had been choſen.

Maſter Alworth, by being thus kept at home, had frequent opportunities of obſerving the malice of his ſiſter and Miſs Denham againſt Harriot, and never failed expoſing their practices to his grandmother; who from thence learnt to ſuſpect their reports about things which paſſed in his abſence, and conſequently could not be cleared up by him. His fondneſs for Harriot ſoon made him beloved by her, and as ſhe found little pleaſure in the ſociety of her other couſins, ſhe ſought his company, but as he was much engaged by his ſtudies, ſhe ſeldom found him at leiſure to play. The tutor greatly delighted with her, tried to awaken in her mind a deſire of improvement, and found it an eaſy taſk; ſhe was inclined to learn, and capable of doing it with great quickneſs. Mrs. Alworth readily entered into the good man's views, and was pleaſed with the eagerneſs of Harriot's application. Maſter

Alworth

Alworth was far enough advanced in learning to aſſiſt his favourite, and from him ſhe received inſtruction with double pleaſure, and more eaſily comprehended his explanations than thoſe of their tutor, who found it difficult to diveſt himſelf ſufficiently of ſcientific terms, which greatly retard the increaſe of knowlege in a youthful mind.

Thus beloved by her grand-mother and Mr. Alworth, and hated and traduced by her female couſins, Harriot lived till ſhe was ſixteen. Years had ſtill improved her perſon, and ſhe had made conſiderable progreſs in learning, when Mrs. Alworth judged it proper that her grandſon ſhould go abroad, to compleat an education which ſhe flattered herſelf was hitherto faultleſs. He had no objection to the ſcheme but what aroſe from his unwillingneſs to leave Harriot, who ſaw his departure approach with great concern. She loved and reſpected her grand-mother, but Mr. Alworth was the only perſon whom ſhe could look upon in the tender and equal light of a friend. To be deprived of his ſociety was loſing the chief pleaſure of her life, and her beſt guardian againſt her enemies.

Mrs. Alworth was pleaſed with the affection which ſo evidently appeared between theſe two young people, ſhe hoped to ſee an happy union ariſe from it. Their fortunes and ages were properly ſuited, and a love which had taken root in childhood, and grown with their encreaſing years, ſeemed to promiſe a laſting harmony, of which the ſweetneſs of their diſpoſitions would be no bad ſecurity. Theſe pleaſing ideas amuſed this worthy woman, but the two friends themſelves had not extended their views ſo far. Bred up like brother and ſiſter, a tenderer degree of relation had not entered

ed their thoughts, nor did any thing more appear neceſſary to their happineſs, than a conſtant enjoyment of each others friendſhip.

In this diſpoſition they parted when Mr. Alworth went abroad. His tutor thinking himſelf not properly qualified to conduct him in his travels, recommended another gentleman, and Mr. Alworth, at Harriot's requeſt, prevailed with their grandmother to detain his old tutor till Harriot's education was compleated.

Mr. Alworth continued abroad two years, during which time Harriot had applied with ſuch unwearied diligence, that ſhe was perfect miſtreſs of the living languages, and no leſs acquainted with Greek and Latin. She was well inſtructed in the ancient and modern philoſophy, and in almoſt every branch of learning.

Mr. Alworth found his couſin not alone improved in underſtanding, her beauty was juſt then in its perfection, and it was ſcarcely poſſible to conceive any thing handſomer. She had great elegance of manner, a point wherein her grand-mother excelled, and was as far removed from conceit as from ignorance. Her ſituation was much mended by the marriage of the eldeſt Miſs Denham; and Miſs Alworth waited only for her brother's arrival and approbation, to enter into the ſame ſtate. The gentleman to whom ſhe was going to be married had firſt made his addreſſes to Harriot; but, as well as ſeveral others, was refuſed by her. She was not inclined to change her ſituation, or this gentleman's fortune, perſon, and character were unexceptionable; however one circumſtance without any other objection would have been ſufficient to have rendered his ſuit unſucceſsful; ſhe perceived that Miſs Alworth was in love with him,

him, and though ſhe had little reaſon to have much regard for her, yet good nature made her anxious for the ſucceſs of a paſſion which ſhe ſaw was deeply rooted.

She therefore, while ſhe diſcouraged his addreſſes, took every means of recommending Miſs Alworth, whoſe treatment of her ſhe believed rather proceeded from compliance with Miſs Denham's than from ill temper.

This gave her hopes that ſhe might make a good wife to Mr. Parnel, the object of her affections. He ſoon perceived, that Miſs Alworth did not behold him with indifference; but as he was much captivated by Harriot's charms, it at firſt had no other effect, than leading him to indulge in complaints of her cruelty to Miſs Alworth, who liſtened with compaſſion. Harriot often repreſented to him how little he ought to wiſh for her conſent to marry him, which he ſo ſtrongly ſollicited; for ſhould ſhe grant it, he would be miſerable with a wife who did not love him. She told him, that 'were he indifferent, her being ſo might do very 'well, and they live on together in that eternal '*ennui*, which muſt ever ſubſiſt between a married 'couple who have no affection for each other, and 'while natural good temper and prudence enabled 'them to dream away a dull life in peace and dead 'inſenſibility, the world might call them happy; 'but that if he really loved her, her indifference 'would render him more wretched than the moſt 'blameable conduct.' She would then repreſent the advantages of marrying a woman whoſe ſole affections he poſſeſſed, though at firſt he felt for her only eſteem and gratitude; and adviſed him by all means to ſeek for one whoſe heart was in that ſituation, which he was well qualified to find.

Though

Though Harriot forbore to mention Miſs Alworth's name, Mr. Parnel well underſtood to whom ſhe alluded, but found it difficult to take her advice. At length however, deprived of all hope of obtaining the woman he loved, and moved to compaſſion by the viſible unhappineſs of one who loved him, he began to liſten to it, and frankly told Harriot, that he underſtood the aim of what ſhe had ſaid. She was not ſorry to throw off all reſtraint, as it gave her the power of ſpeaking more to the purpoſe; and at length brought him to ſay, that he ſhould not be unwilling to marry her. Harriot feared leſt the belief of Mr. Parnel's ſtill retaining an affection for her, might render Miſs Alworth uneaſy, and therefore adviſed him gradually to ſlacken his addreſſes to her, and at the ſame time to increaſe in proportion his attentions for Miſs Alworth, that he might appear to prefer her, ſince a ſymptom of inconſtancy ſhe knew would not ſo much affect her as any ſign of indifference, and Harriot's generoſity ſo far exceeded her vanity, that ſhe very ſincerely deſired to be thought neglected, rather than give any alloy to the happineſs of her couſin.

There was the more colour for this ſuppoſition, as Mr. Parnel had never been publicly diſcarded by her, ſince for the completion of her views ſhe had found it neceſſary to preſerve his acquaintance.

Miſs Alworth was happy beyond expreſſion when ſhe found herſelf the object of Mr. Parnel's addreſſes. Her wiſhes ſo far blinded her, that ſhe really believed Harriot was neglected for her; but yet knew ſhe had long been endeavouring to ſerve her, and was obliged to her for ſome inſtructions how to behave ſo to Mr. Parnel as to ſecure his eſteem and confidence, the beſt foundation for love. As her brother was then ſoon expected over, Mrs. Alworth

worth thought that to wait for his approbation was but a proper compliment.

Mr. Alworth was not at all inclined to object to ſo good a match, eſpecially as it was much deſired by his ſiſter, and the marriage was celebrated ſoon after his return. This ceremony did not ſo engage his attention, as to render him leſs ſenſible of the pleaſure of renewing his friendſhip with Harriot, who received him with the ſincereſt joy. He found her greatly improved, and every hour paſſed agreeably that was ſpent in her company. They were continually together, and never happy but when they were ſo. Every one talked of their mutual paſſion; and they were ſo often told of it that they began to fancy it was true, but were ſurprized to find that name ſhould be given to an affection calm and rational as theirs, totally free from that turbulency and wildneſs, which had always appeared to them the true characteriſtics of love. They were ſenſible however, that nothing was ſo dear to them as each other, they were always ſorry to part, uneaſy aſunder, and rejoiced to meet; a walk was doubly pleaſing when they both ſhared it; a book became more entertaining if they read together; every thing was inſipid that they did not mutually enjoy. When they conſidered theſe ſymptoms, they were inclined to think the general opinion was juſt, and that their affection, being free from paſſion, proceeded from ſome peculiarity of temper.

Mrs. Alworth thought ſhe ſhould give them great ſatisfaction in propoſing a ſpeedy marriage; and rejoiced to ſee the firſt wiſh of her heart, which had been for their union, ſo nearly compleated. The old lady's propoſal made them a little thoughtful; they ſaw no very good reaſon for their marrying; they

they enjoyed each others ſociety already, and did not wiſh for any more intimate tie. But neither knew how to refuſe, ſince the other might take it for an affront, and they would not for the world have had the ſincerity and tenderneſs of their affection brought into doubt. Beſides they began to think, that as their love was ſo generally looked upon as certain, it might become difficult to continue the ſame degree of intimacy without expoſing themſelves to cenſure. This thought was ſufficient to determine them to marry; and their entire affection for, and confidence in each other, convinced them they ran no hazard in this ſtep; and that they could not fail of being happy as man and wife, who had ſo long enjoyed great felicity in the moſt intimate friendſhip.

In conſequence of this reſolution, lawyers were employed to draw up ſettlements, and every thing requiſite for a proper appearance on their marriage was ordered; but they were ſo very patient on the ſubject, that the preparations went on ſlowly. Some who hoped to have their diligence quickened, in a manner uſual on ſuch occaſions, affected delays, but were ſurprized to find that no complaint enſued. They grew ſtill more dilatory, but the only conſequence that aroſe from it was a decent ſolicitation to diſpatch, without any of thoſe more effectual means being uſed, which impatient love or greedy avarice ſuggeſt.

Theſe young people were perfectly happy and contented, and therefore waited with compoſure for the concluſion of preparations, which however ſlowly did however proceed. The old lady indeed was leſs patient, but a grandmother's ſollicitations have no very powerful effect on lawyers; therefore her's availed little.

During

During theſe delays Mrs. Tonſton, formerly the eldeſt Miſs Denham, having been extremely ill, was ſent to Buxton for the recovery of her health. As this place was but a day's journey from Mrs. Alworth's houſe, ſhe expreſſed a deſire to ſee her granddaughter, and Mr. Alworth and Harriot, as well as Miſs Denham, very readily accompanied her thither.

The accommodations at Buxton allow very little ſecluſion; and as Mrs. Tonſton was ſufficiently recovered to conform to the cuſtoms of the place, they joined in the general ſociety. The firſt day at dinner Mr. Alworth's attention was much engroſſed by Miſs Melman, a very pretty woman. She was far from a perfect beauty, but her countenance expreſſed an engaging vivacity, and great good humour, though a wandering unfixed look, indicated a light and unſteady mind. Her perſon was little but elegant; there was a ſprightlineſs in her whole figure which was very attractive: her converſation was ſuitable to it, ſhe had great life and ſpirit, all the common *routine* of diſcourſe, and a faſhionable readineſs to ſkim lightly over all ſubjects. Her underſtanding was ſufficiently circumſcribed; but what ſhe wanted in real ſenſe, ſhe made up in vivacity, no unſucceſsful ſubſtitute in general eſtimation.

This young lady was almoſt a new character to Mr. Alworth. He had lived conſtantly at his grand-mother's till he went abroad, and as ſoon as he returned into the kingdom he went thither; from which, as it was the middle of ſummer, and conſequently London had no temptations, he had never ſtirred. He therefore had been little uſed to any woman but his ſober and ſenſible grand-mother's two couſins who were pretty enough, but had no great charms of underſtanding; a ſiſter rather ſilly,

and

and the incomparable Harriot, whoſe wit was as ſound as her judgment ſolid and ſterling, free from affectation, and all little effeminate arts and airs. Reaſon governed her thoughts and actions, nor could the greateſt flow of ſpirits make her for a moment forget propriety. Every thing in her was natural grace, ſhe was always conſiſtent and uniform, and a ſtranger to caprice.

Miſs Milman was a compleat coquet, capricious and fantaſtical. As Mr. Alworth was the prettieſt man at the place, and known to have a good fortune, ſhe ſoon ſingled him out as a conqueſt worthy of her, and ſucceſsfully played off all her arts. By appearing to like him, ſhe inticed him to addreſs her; and by a well managed capriciouſneſs of behaviour kept up the ſpirit of a purſuit. She frequently gave him reaſon to believe her favourably diſpoſed towards him, and as often, by obliging him to doubt of it, encreaſed his deſire to be certain it was true. She kept him in a ſtate of conſtant anxiety, and made him know her conſequence by the continual tranſition from pleaſure to pain in which he lived.

He had not been much more than a fortnight at Buxton, when his attachment to Miſs Melman became very apparent. Harriot ſaw an aſſiduity in his behaviour very different from what he had ever ſhewn to her. He felt that in the circumſtances wherein he and Harriot then were, his conduct muſt appear injurious, and ſhame and the ſecret reproaches of his conſcience made him take all poſſible opportunities of avoiding her preſence: if he was obliged to converſe with her, it was with an air ſo reſtrained and inattentive, as made her fear his regard for her was entirely vaniſhed. The ſincere affection ſhe had for him rendered this apprehenſion

henſion extremely painful. She would have been contented to have ſeen another woman his wife, but could not bear the thought of loſing his friendſhip. At firſt ſhe paſſed over this change in ſilence, and appeared even not to obſerve it; but when they received an account that the marriage writings were finiſhed, ſhe thought an affected blindneſs highly unſeaſonable, and told him, in the moſt friendly and generous manner, that, 'nothing remained to be done but to cancel them, that, 'ſhe plainly perceived another had obtained the 'heart ſhe never poſſeſſed; that, the meaſures taken 'for their marriage were of no ſort of conſequence, 'and ſhe flattered herſelf ſhe might retain his 'friendſhip, though he gave his hand to another.'

Mr. Alworth at firſt appeared confounded, but recovering himſelf, confeſſed to her frankly, 'he 'never knew the weakneſs and folly of the human 'heart, till his own convinced him of it; that, 'he had always felt for her the moſt perfect eſteem, 'joined with the tendereſt affection; but his paſſions had had no ſhare in his attachment. On 'the contrary, he found them ſtrongly engaged 'on the ſide of Miſs Melman, and felt an ardour 'for her which he had never before experienced. 'That, he could not think of being her huſband 'without rapture, though he ſaw plainly ſhe was 'inferior to his Harriot both in beauty and underſtanding; and as for her principles, he was totally ignorant of them. He now, he ſaid, perceived the difference between friendſhip and love, 'and was convinced, that eſteem and paſſion were 'totally independant, ſince ſhe entirely poſſeſſed 'the one, while Miſs Melman totally engroſſed 'the other.'

Harriot

Harriot was pleaſed with the frankneſs of Mr. Alworth's confeſſion, and wiſhed only to be ſecure of his eſteem, but ſhe ſaw him ſo wholly taken up with Miſs Melman, that ſhe was convinced paſſion had greater power over his ſex than eſteem, and that while his mind was under the tumultuous influence of love, ſhe muſt expect very little ſatisfaction from his friendſhip.

She took upon herſelf the taſk of breaking off their treaty of marriage, and acquainted her grandmother with her reſolution, who ſaw too plainly the reaſon for her doing ſo to blame her conduct, though ſhe grieved at the neceſſity for it, and could not ſincerely forgive her grandſon's levity and want of judgment, in preferring a wild fantaſtic girl, to the extreme beauty, and ſolid well-known merit of Harriot, an error for which ſhe prophetically ſaw he would in time be ſeverely puniſhed.

Harriot, from the intended bride, now became the confidant of Mr. Alworth, though with an aching heart; for ſhe feared that after experiencing the more active ſenſations of a ſtrong paſſion, friendſhip would appear too inſipid to have any charms for him. She accompanied Mrs. Alworth home before the lovers choſe to leave Buxton, but not till ſhe had prevailed with her grandmother to conſent to the marriage between Miſs Melman and Mr. Alworth ſhould be celebrated at her houſe.

When every thing requiſite for the ceremony was ready, they came to Mrs. Alworth's, where the indiſſoluble knot was tied, and in the bridegroom's opinion the moſt perfect happineſs ſecured to his future years. They ſtaid but a few days after the marriage, and then went to her father's houſe, till the approaching winter called them to London.

Harriot

Harriot found a great loſs of a friend ſhe ſo ſincerely loved, but ſhe hoped he would be as happy as he expected, and had the ſatisfaction of believing he retained a tender regard for her. They correſponded frequently; and his letters aſſured her of his felicity. After he had been ſome time fixed in London, he grew indeed leſs eloquent on the ſubject, which did not ſurprize her, as the variety of his engagements ſhortened his letters, and denied him leiſure to expatiate on the moſt pleaſing topics.

Miſs Denham had accompanied her ſiſter home, and in the winter Mrs. Alworth was informed by Mrs. Tonſton, that Miſs Denham had received a propoſal from a gentleman of a good eſtate, but he inſiſted on a fortune of nine thouſand pounds, which was two more than ſhe was poſſeſſed of; and as they wiſhed the old lady to make that addition, Mrs. Tonſton as an inducement added, that the gentleman was extremely agreeable to her ſiſter.

Mrs. Alworth was not inclined to comply with their views, and made no other anſwer to all Harriot urged to prevail with her to give the requiſite ſum, than that it was more than perhaps would at her death fall to Miſs Denham's ſhare, and ſhe ſaw no temptation to purchaſe ſo mercenary a man. When Harriot found that all ſhe could ſay was unavailing, ſhe told Mrs. Alworth, that, 'if ſhe would give her leave, ſhe was determined to make the required addition out of her fortune; for ſhe could not bear her couſin ſhould be diſappointed in a particular ſhe thought eſſential to her happineſs, by the want of a ſum of money which ſhe could very well ſpare; adding, that the treatment ſhe had received from her couſins, ſhe attributed to childiſhneſs and folly,

'and ſhould be far worſe than they were, if ſhe 'could remember it with reſentment.'

Mrs. Alworth was greatly touched with this inſtance of Harriot's generoſity, and finding that nothing but the exertion of her authority, which her grand-daughter acknowleged abſolute, and always obeyed implicity, could prevent her from performing her purpoſe; ſhe determined to take the moſt effectual means of hindering it, by advancing the money herſelf, and invited Miſs Denham and her lover to her houſe; where the marriage was performed, and they departed.

Mrs. Alworth began to feel the infirmities of age, and now that ſhe and Harriot were left to continual *tête à tête*, abſolute quiet might have degenerated into ſomething like dullneſs; but the diſturbance they found not at home, reached them from abroad. Mr. Parnel was wearied with his wife's fondneſs, who not conſidering that he had married her more out of gratitude than affection, had diſguſted him with the continual profeſſions of a love, to which his heart would not make an equal return. This fondneſs teazed a temper, naturally good, into peeviſhneſs, and was near converting indifference into diſlike. Mrs. Parnel diſtreſſed beyond meaſure at an effect ſo contrary to what ſhe intended, reproached him with ingratitude, and tormented him with tears and complaints.

Harriot, who conſidered this match as in a great meaſure her own work, was particularly deſirous of redreſſing theſe grievances, and took great pains to perſuade Mrs. Parnel to reſtrain her fondneſs, and ſuppreſs her complaints, while ſhe endeavoured to make her huſband ſenſible, that he ought, in conſideration for the cauſe, to pardon the troubleſome effects, and not to ſuffer himſelf to be diſ-

guſted

guſted by that affection in his wife, which to moſt huſbands would appear a merit. Mrs. Alworth joined to Harriot's perſuaſion, the influence her age and reſpectable character gave her, and though not without great difficulty, they at laſt ſaw Mr. and Mrs. Parnel live in peace and amity, without any of the pleaſures ariſing from ſtrong and delicate affections, or the ſufferings occaſioned by ill humour and hatred; and whatever void they might find in their hearts, they were ſo happy as to have well filled by two very fine children, which Mrs. Parnel brought her huſband; who always treated her with great indulgence, in hopes of fixing Harriot's good opinion; for though deſpair had damped his paſſion, yet he ſtill loved her with the tendereſt reſpect and reverence.

Towards the latter end of the ſecond year of Mr. Alworth's marriage, his grand-mother died, much regretted by Harriot, whom ſhe left miſtreſs of her own fortune, with the addition of four thouſand pounds, part of it the accumulated intereſt of her paternal inheritance, the reſt Mrs. Alworth's legacy. Her grandſon ſucceeded to her houſe, and intreated Harriot, that he might find her there when he came to take poſſeſſion.

Their correſpondence had been regular, but they had never met ſince his mariage. Mrs. Alworth was not fond of the converſation of an old lady; and from ſeeing herſelf not very agreeable to her grandmother, felt an uncommon awe in her preſence. Harriot had received repeated invitations from them, but could not be prevailed with to leave old Mrs. Alworth, who had no other companion.

The only relief ſhe found in her affliction for the loſs of ſo worthy a parent, was putting the houſe, and all belonging to it, in order, for the reception of her firſt friend, in whoſe ſociety ſhe expected to renew the happineſs ſhe had ſo long enjoyed from it. Nor was ſhe diſappointed in her hopes of finding him ſtill her friend; they met with mutual joy, and Mrs. Alworth ſeemed at firſt as much pleaſed with her new poſſeſſion, as they were with each other. But Harriot ſoon found her happineſs conſiderably damped. Mr. Alworth, unwilling to let his grandmother know the ill ſucceſs of an union which he was ſenſible ſhe diſapproved, had been ſilent on that ſubject in his letters, but he was too well acquainted with the generoſity of Harriot's temper, to fear ſhe would triumph at the natural conſequence of his ill-grounded paſſion, and therefore concealed not from her any part of the uneaſineſs which his wife's diſpoſition gave him. He too late ſaw the difference between ſenſible vivacity and animal ſpirits, and found Mrs. Alworth a giddy coquet, too volatile to think, too vain to love; pleaſed with admiration, inſenſible to affection, fond of flattery, but indifferent to true praiſe; imprudently vivacious in mixed companies, lifeleſs when alone with him; and deſirous of charming all mankind except her huſband, who of his whole ſex ſeemed the only perſon of no conſequence to her. As her view was to captivate in public, ſhe covered a very pretty complexion with pearl-powder and rouge, becauſe they made her more reſplendent by candle-light, and in public places. Mr. Alworth had in ſtrong terms expreſſed his abhorence of that practice; but, 'ſhe was ſurprized 'he ſhould intermeddle in an affair that was no 'buſineſs

'buſineſs of his, ſurely ſhe might wear what com-
'plexion ſhe pleaſed.' The natural turn of his temper inclined him to rational ſociety, but in that his wife could bear no part. The little time ſhe was at home was employed in dreſſing, and a multitude of coxcombs attended her toilet. Mr. Alworth's extreme fondneſs for her made him at firſt very wretched; he ſoon found himſelf the moſt diſregarded of all mankind, and every man appeared his rival; but on nearer obſervation he perceived his jealouſy was groundleſs, and that ſhe was too giddy to love any thing. This made his pride eaſy, but his tenderneſs ſtill had much to endure, till at length contempt produced ſome degree of indifference, and his ſufferings became leſs acute, though he lived in continual grief, at finding himſelf diſappointed of all his airy hopes of happineſs.

Harriot was ſcarcely leſs afflicted than himſelf, ſhe endeavoured to render him more contented with his ſituation, and attempted to teach Mrs. Alworth to think, but in both was equally unſucceſsful. However this was not all ſhe had to endure. When Mr. Alworth began with unprejudiced eyes to compare her he had loſt, with the woman for whom he relinquiſhed her; when he ſaw how greatly Harriot's natural beauty eclipſed Mrs. Alworth's, notwithſtanding the addition of all her borrowed charms, he wondered what magic had blinded him to her ſuperiority. But when he drew a compariſon between the admirable underſtanding of the one, her great fund of knowlege, the inexhauſtible variety in her converſation, with the inſipid dulneſs, or unmeaning vivacity of the other, he was ſtill more aſtoniſhed, and could not forgive his ſtrange infatuation. This train of

thought perhaps had no ſmall ſhare in giving riſe to a paſſion for Harriot, which he had never felt, while it might have been the ſource of much happineſs to them both. In ſhort, he became violently in love with her, and fell a prey to the moſt cruel regret and deſpair; ſenſible that all he ſuffered was the conſequence of his own folly.

Reſpect for Harriot made Mr. Alworth endeavour to conceal his paſſion, but could not prevent its daily increaſe. At this time I became acquainted with her, during a viſit I made in the neighbourhood; and as the natural openneſs both of her diſpoſition and mine, inclined us to converſe with much freedom, I one day took the liberty to tell her how much Mr. Alworth was in love with her. She had not the leaſt ſuſpicion of it, the entire affection which had always ſubſiſted between them, ſhe imagined ſufficient to lead me into that error, but told me the thing was impoſſible; and to prove it, related all the circumſtances of their intended union. Appearances were too ſtrong to ſuffer me to be perſuaded that I was miſtaken; I acknowleged that what ſhe urged ſeemed to contradict my opinion, but that it was no proof; for the perverſeneſs of human nature was ſuch, that it did not appear to me at all improbable that the eaſineſs of obtaining her, when they had both been, as it were, bred up with that view, might be the ſole occaſion of his indifference; and the impoſſibility of ever poſſeſſing her now, would only ſerve to inflame his paſſion.

Harriot accuſed me of repreſenting human nature more perverſe and abſurd than it really was, and continued firm in the perſuaſion of my being miſtaken. Whatever glaring ſigns of Mr. Alworth's love appeared, ſhe ſet them all down to the account

account of friendſhip; till at length his mind was ſo torn with grief and deſpair, that no longer able to conceal the cauſe of his greateſt ſufferings, he begged her to teach him how to conquer a paſſion, which, while it exiſted, muſt make him wretched; and with the greateſt confuſion told her how unaccountably unfortunate he was, both in not loving, and in loving, each equally out of ſeaſon. Almoſt diſtracted with the diſtreſsful ſtate of his mind, he was in the utmoſt horror leſt this declaration ſhould offend her; and throwing himſelf at her feet, with a countenance and manner which ſhewed him almoſt frantic with deſpair, terrified her ſo much, that ſhe did not feel half the ſhock this declaration would have given her, had it been made with more calmneſs.

She ſtrove to ſilence him; ſhe endeavoured to raiſe him from her feet, but to no purpoſe; ſhe could not abate the agonies of his mind, without aſſuring him ſhe forgave him. Her ſpirits were in extreme agitation till ſhe ſaw him a little compoſed; for ſhe feared his ſenſes were affected; but when her alarm began to abate, the effect of her terrors and her grief appeared in a flood of tears; Mr. Alworth found them infectious, and ſhe was obliged to dry them up in order to comfort him. When he grew more compoſed, Harriot ventured, after expreſſing her concern for his having conceived ſo unfortunate a paſſion, to intimate that abſence was the beſt remedy, and that there was nothing to be done but for her to leave the houſe.

Mr. Alworth was not able to ſupport the mention of her going away, and intreated her, at leaſt to give him time to arm himſelf againſt the greateſt misfortune that could befal him, the loſs of her ſociety. She dared not controul him in any thing

material, while his mind continued in that deſperate ſituation, and therefore conſented to ſtay ſome time longer. She found it very difficult to make him think, that there ever was a proper time for her to depart, though his paſſion was much leſs tormenting ſince he had ventured to declare it; and what before aroſe nearly to diſtraction, ſunk now into a ſoft melancholy. Mrs. Alworth paid ſo little attention to her huſband, that ſhe had not perceived the conflict in his mind. She was wearied with the country to the greateſt degree, and made the *tireſome* days as ſhort as ſhe could, by not riſing till noon; from that time till dinner, her toilet found her ſufficient employment. As the neighbourhood was large, ſhe very frequently contrived to make a party at cards; but as her company was not uſed to play high, this afforded her little relief, except ſhe could find ſomebody to bet with her, which was not very difficult, as ſhe was contented to do it to a diſadvantage.

In this way ſhe contrived, juſt, as ſhe called it, 'to drag on life; and wondered how ſo fine a woman as Harriot, could have ſo long buried herſelf 'in that place, ſcarcely more lively than the family vault.'

When Harriot thought ſhe had ſufficiently convinced Mr. Alworth of the neceſſity of her abſence, ſhe took her leave with much greater concern than ſhe would ſuffer to appear, though ſhe did not affect indifference; but the truth was, Mr. Alworth's paſſionate tenderneſs for her, had made an impreſſion on her heart, which without it, all his merit could not effect. The melancholy languor which overſpread his countenance, gave it charms ſhe had never before diſcovered in it; the ſoft accents in which he breathed the moſt delicate love,

love, penetrated to her very ſoul, and ſhe no longer found that indifference which had been ſo remarkable a part of her character. But ſhe carefully concealed theſe new ſenſations, in hopes that he would more eaſily conquer his paſſion, for not thinking it returned.

Though the winter was ſcarcely begun, yet having no inducement to go to any other place, ſhe went to London; and as I had prolonged my ſtay in the country only to gratify my inclination for her company, I went with her to town. Mrs. Alworth did not continue there a month after us; but her huſband, whoſe health was by no means in a good ſtate, went to Bath; and that he might not be quite deſtitute of pleaſure, he carried his little boy with him, though but a year and a quarter old. His wife did not contend with him for this privilege, ſhe would have ſeen little more of the babe had it been in London.

Harriot Trentham, was at her firſt arrival, in very low ſpirits, and every letter ſhe received from Mr. Alworth increaſed her dejection, as it painted his in very ſtrong colours. As the town filled ſhe began to try if diſſipation could diſpel her melancholy. Her beauty, the fineneſs of her perſon, and her being known to have a large fortune, which Fame even exaggerated, procured her many lovers, and ſhe became the moſt admired woman in town. This was a new ſource of pleaſure to her. She had lived where ſhe ſaw not many ſingle men, and though few of theſe who dared to flatter themſelves with hopes, had failed paying their addreſſes to her, yet theſe ſucceſſive courtſhips were very dull, when compared with all the flutter of general admiration. Her books were now neglected, and to avoid thinking on a ſubject which conſtant-

ly afflicted her, ſhe forced herſelf into public, and was glad to find that the idleneſs of the men, and her own vanity, could afford her entertainment.

She was not however ſo totally engroſſed by this pleaſing diſſipation, as to neglect any means of ſerving the diſtreſſed. Mrs. Tonſton exerting the genius ſhe had ſo early ſhewn for traducing others, ſet her huſband and his family at variance, till at length the falſhoods, by which ſhe had effected it, came to be diſcovered. Her huſband and ſhe had never lived well together, and this proof of her bad heart diſguſted him ſo intirely, that he turned her out of his houſe, allowing her a meer trifle for her ſupport. In this diſtreſs ſhe applied to Harriot, who ſhe knew was ever ready to ſerve even thoſe who had moſt injured her.

Her application was not unſucceſsful. Harriot ſent her a conſiderable preſent for her immediate convenience, and then went into the country to Mr. Tonſton, to whom ſhe repreſented ſo effectually his ungenerous treatment, ſince the fortune his wife brought him gave her a right to a decent maintenance, that he made a proper ſettlement upon her, and gave the writings into Harriot's hands, who not only ſaw the money paid regularly, but took ſo much pains to convince Mrs. Tonſton of the malignity of her diſpoſition, that ſhe brought her to a due ſenſe of it, and by applying for his aſſiſtance to mend her heart, who beſt knew its defects, ſhe became ſo altered in temper, that five years after her ſeparation from her huſband, Harriot effected a reconciliation, and they now live in great amity together, gratefully acknowledging their obligations to her.

I have anticipated this fact in order to render my narrative leſs tedious, or I ſhould have ſtopped at Harriot's procuring a ſettlement for Mrs. Tonſton, and have told you, that by lying in her return at an inn where the ſmall-pox then was, ſhe caught that diſtemper, and ſoon after ſhe arrived in London it appeared. I need not ſay that ſhe had it to a very violent degree. Being then in town I had the good fortune to nurſe her, and flatter myſelf that my care was not uſeleſs; for in caſes ſo dangerous, no one who does not feel all the tender ſollicitude of a friend, can be a proper nurſe.

Mrs. Alworth wrote her huſband word of Harriot's illneſs, who came poſt to London, filled with the extremeſt anxiety, and ſhared the fatigue of nurſing with me; ſhe was all the time delirious. When ſhe came to her ſenſes, ſhe at firſt ſeemed mortified to think Mr. Alworth had ſeen her in that diſfigured condition; but on reflexion told me, 'ſhe rejoiced in it, as ſhe thought it muſt 'totally extinguiſh his paſſion; and her great-'eſt ſollicitude was for his happineſs.' But ſhe afterwards found her expectation was ill grounded.

When ſhe recovered, ſhe perceived that the ſmall-pox had entirely deſtroyed her beauty. She acknowleged ſhe was not inſenſible to this mortification; and to avoid the obſervation of the envious, or even of the idly curious, ſhe retired, as ſoon as ſhe was able to travel, to a country houſe which I hired for her.

In a very ſhort time ſhe became perfectly contented with the alteration this cruel diſtemper had made in her. Her love for reading returned, and ſhe regained the quiet happineſs of which flutter

and diſſipation had deprived her, without ſubſtituting any thing ſo valuable in its place. She has often ſaid, 'ſhe looks on this accident as a reward for the good ſhe had done Mrs. Touſton, and that few benevolent actions receive ſo immediate a recompence, or we ſhould be leſs remiſs in our duties, though not more meritorious in performing them.' She found retirement better calculated for overcoming an hopeleſs paſſion than noiſe and flutter. She had indeed by diſſipation often chaſed Mr. Alworth from her thoughts, but at the firſt moment of leiſure his idea returned in as lively colours, as if it had always kept poſſeſſion of her mind. In the country ſhe had time to reflect on the neceſſity of conquering this inclination, if ſhe wiſhed to enjoy any tolerable happineſs; and therefore took proper meaſures to combat it. Reaſon and piety, when united, are extremely prevalent, and with their aſſiſtance ſhe reſtrained her affection once more within its ancient bounds of friendſhip. Her letters to Mr. Alworth, were filled with remonſtrances againſt the indulgence of his love, and the ſame means ſhe had found effectual, ſhe recommended to him, and with ſatisfaction learnt, that though they had not entirely ſucceeded, yet he had acquired ſuch a command over his heart, that he was as little wretched as a man can be, who is a living monument of the too common folly of being captivated by a ſudden glare of perſon and parts; and of the fatal error of thoſe men who ſeek in marriage for an amuſing trifler, rather than a rational and amiable companion, and too late find that the vivacity which pleaſes in the miſtreſs, is often a fatal vice in a wife. He lives chiefly in the country, has generally a few friends

friends in the houſe with him, and takes a great deal of pains in the education of his two ſons; while their mother ſpends almoſt the whole year in town, immerſed in folly and diſſipation.

About fourteen years ago Harriot, who I ought to begin to call Mrs. Trentham, came to ſee a lady in this neighbourhood, and thus was firſt known to the inhabitants of this manſion. They were much pleaſed with her acquaintance, and when ſhe had performed her viſit, invited her to paſs a little time with them. She required no ſollicitation, for it was the very thing ſhe wiſhed, and here ſhe has remained ever ſince. When Mr. Maynard died, leaving me but a ſmall jointure, Mrs. Trentham was indulged in her inclination, of aſking me to ſpend the firſt part of my widowhood with her and her friends; and I have been fortunate enough to recommend myſelf ſo effectually, that they have left me no room to doubt they chuſe I ſhould continue with them, and indeed I think I could ſcarcely ſupport life were I baniſhed from this heavenly ſociety.

Mrs. Trentham and Mr. Alworth keep up a conſtant correſpondence by letters, but avoid meeting. His wife has brought him one daughter, and Mrs. Trentham's happineſs has been rendered compleat, by obtaining from her permiſſion to educate this child; a favour, which contrary to what is uſual, is eſteemed very ſmall by her who granted, and very great by the perſon that received it. This girl is now ten years old, and the moſt accompliſhed of her age of any one, perhaps, in the kingdom. Her perſon is fine, and her temper extremely engaging. She went about a week ago to her father, whom ſhe viſits for about three weeks twice in a year, and never returns unimproved.

As

As Mrs. Trentham's fortune made a good addition to the income of the ſociety, they on this occaſion eſtabliſhed in the pariſh a manufacture of carpets and ruggs, which has ſucceeded ſo well, as to enrich all the country round about.

As the morning was not very far advanced, I aſked Mrs. Maynard to conduct us to this manufacture, as in my opinion there is no ſight ſo delightful as extenſive induſtry. She readily complied, and led us to a ſort of ſtreet, the moſt inhabited part of the village, above half a mile from Millenium-Hall. Here we found ſeveral hundreds of people of all ages, from ſix years old to four-ſcore, employed in the various parts of the manufacture, ſome ſpinning, ſome weaving, others dying the worſted, and in ſhort all buſy, ſinging and whiſtling, with the appearance of general chearfulneſs, and their neat dreſs ſhewed them in a condition of proper plenty.

The ladies, it ſeems, at firſt hired perſons to inſtruct the neighbourhood, which was then burdened with poor, and ſo over ſtocked with hands, that only a ſmall part of them could find work. But as they feared an enterpriſing undertaker might ruin their plan, they themſelves undertook to be ſtewards; they ſtood the firſt expence, allowed a conſiderable profit to the directors, but kept the diſtribution of the money entirely in their own hands: thus they prevent the poor from being oppreſſed by their ſuperiors, for they allow them great wages, and by their very diligent inſpection hinder any frauds. I never was more charmed, than to ſee a manufacture ſo well ordered, that ſcarcely any one is too young or too old to partake of its emoluments. As the ladies have the direction of the

the whole, they give more to the children and the aged, in proportion to the work they do, than to thoſe who are more capable, as a proper encouragement, and reward for induſtry in thoſe ſeaſons of life in which it is ſo uncommon.

We were ſo taken up with obſerving theſe people, that we got home but juſt as dinner was carrying in.

In the afternoon we informed the ladies how we had ſpent the latter part of the morning, and in the courſe of converſation Lamont told them, that 'they were the firſt people he ever knew who 'lived entirely for others, without any regard to 'their own pleaſure; and that were he a Roman 'Catholic, he ſhould beg of them to confer on him 'the merit of ſome of their works of ſupererroga-'tion.'

I do not know where you could find them, replied Mrs. Mancel, 'I believe we have not been 'able to diſcover any ſuch; on the contrary, we are 'ſenſible of great deficiencies in the performance 'of our duty'

'Can you imagine, Madam, interrupted La-'mont, that all you do here is a duty?

'Indeſpenſibly ſo, anſwered Mrs. Mancel, we 'are told by him who cannot err, that our time, 'our money, and our underſtandings, are entruſt-'ed with us as ſo many talents, for the uſe of 'which we muſt give a ſtrict account. How we 'ought to uſe them he has likewiſe told us; as to 'our fortunes in the moſt expreſs terms, when he 'commands us to feed the hungry, to cloath the 'naked, to relieve the priſoner, and to take care 'of the ſick. Thoſe who have not an inheri-'tance that enables them to do this are commanded

'to

'to labour, in order to obtain means to relieve
'thoſe who are incapable of gaining the neceſſa-
'ries of life. Can we then imagine, that every one
'is not required to aſſiſt others to the utmoſt of his
'power, ſince we are commanded even to work
'for the means of doing ſo? God's mercy and
'bounty is univerſal, it flows unaſked, and un-
'merited; we are bid to endeavour to imitate
'him as far as our nature will enable us to do it.
'What bounds then ought we to ſet to our good
'offices, but the want of power to extend them
'farther? Our faculties and our time ſhould be
'employed in directing our donations in a
'manner the moſt conduſive to the benefit of
'mankind, the moſt for the encouragement of
'virtue, and the ſuppreſſion of vice; to aſſiſt in
'this work is the buſineſs of ſpeech, of reaſon, and
'of time. Theſe ought to be employed in ſeek-
'ing out opportunities of doing good, and in con-
'triving means for regulating it to the beſt pur-
'poſe. Shall I allow much careful thought to-
'wards ſettling the affairs of my houſhold with
'œconomy, and be careleſs how I diſtribute my
'benefactions to the poor, to whom I am only a
'ſteward, and of whoſe intereſts I ought to be as
'careful as of my own? By giving them my
'money I may ſacrifice my covetouſneſs, but by
'doing it negligently I indulge my indolence,
'which I ought to endeavour to conquer as much
'as every other vice. Each ſtate has its trials;
'the poverty of the lower rank of people exerciſes
'their induſtry and patience; the riches of the
'great are trials of their temperance, humility,
'and humanity. Theirs is perhaps the more
'difficult part, but their preſent reward is alſo
'greater

'greater if they acquit themſelves well; as for the 'future, there may probably be no inequality.

'You obſerved, Sir, ſaid Mrs. Trentham, that 'we live for others, without any regard to our 'own pleaſure, therefore I imagine you think our 'way of life inconſiſtent with it; but give me 'leave to ſay you are miſtaken. What is there 'worth enjoying in this world that we do not 'poſſeſs? We have all the conveniences of life, 'nay, all the luxuries that can be included among 'them. We might indeed keep a large retinue; 'but do you think the ſight of a number of uſeleſs 'attendants could afford us half the real ſatisfaction, 'that we feel from ſeeing the money, which muſt 'be laviſhed on them, expended in ſupporting the 'old and decrepid, or nouriſhing the helpleſs in-'fant? We might dreſs with ſo much expence, that 'we could ſcarcely move under the burden of our 'apparel; but is that more eligible, than to ſee the 'ſhivering wretch clad in warm and comfortable 'attire? Can the greateſt luxury of the table afford 'ſo true a pleaſure, as the reflection, that inſtead of its 'being over-charged with ſuperfluities, the homely 'board of the cottager is bleſſed with plenty? We 'might ſpend our time in going from place to 'place, where none wiſh to ſee us except they find 'a deficiency at the card table, perpetually living 'among thoſe, whoſe vacant minds are ever ſeek-'ing after pleaſures foreign to their own taſtes, 'and purſue joys which vaniſh as ſoon as poſſeſſed; 'for theſe would you have us leave the infinite ſa-'tisfaction of being beheld with gratitude and 'love, and the ſucceſſive enjoyments of rational 'delights, which here fill up every hour? Should 'we do wiſely in quitting a ſcene, where every

'object

'object exalts our mind to the great Creator, to 'mix among all the folly of depraved nature?

'If we take it in a more ſerious light ſtill, we 'ſhall perceive a great difference in the comforts 'ariſing from the reflexions on a life ſpent in an 'endeavour to obey our Maker, and to correct our 'own defects, in a conſtant ſenſe of our offences, 'and an earneſt deſire to avoid the commiſſion of 'them for the future, from a courſe of hurry and 'diſſipation, which will not afford us leiſure to re-'collect our errors, nor attention to attempt 'amending them.'

'The difference is indeed ſtriking, ſaid La-mont, and there can be no doubt which is moſt 'eligible; but are you not too rigid in your cen-'ſures of diſſipation? You ſeem to be inclined to 'forbid all innocent pleaſures.'

'By no means, replied Mrs. Trentham, but 'things are not always innocent becauſe they are 'trifling. Can any thing be more innocent than 'picking of ſtraws, or playing at puſh-pin; but if 'a man employs himſelf ſo continually in either, 'that he neglects to ſerve a friend, or to inſpect 'his affairs, does it not ceaſe to be innocent? 'Should a ſchool-boy be found whipping a top 'during ſchool hours, would his maſter forbear 'correction becauſe it is an innocent amuſement? 'And yet thus we plead for things as trifling, tho' 'they obſtruct the exerciſe of the greateſt duties 'in life. Whatever renders us forgetful of our 'Creator, and of the purpoſes for which he called 'us into being, or leads us to be inattentive to his 'commands, or neglectful in the performance of 'them, becomes criminal, however innocent in 'its own nature. While we purſue theſe things

'with

'with a moderation which prevents ſuch effects, 'they are always innocent, and often deſireable, 'the exceſs only is to be avoided.'

'I have nothing left me to ſay, anſwered Lamont, 'than that your doctrine *muſt* be true, and 'your lives *are* happy; but may I without impertinence obſerve, that I ſhould imagine your 'extenſive charities require an immenſe fortune.'

'Not ſo much, perhaps, ſaid Mrs. Morgan, as you ſuppoſe. We keep a very regular account, 'and at an average, for every year will not be 'exactly the ſame, the total ſtands thus. The 'girls ſchool four hundred pounds a year, the boys 'an hundred and fifty, apprenticing ſome and 'equipping others for ſervice one hundred. The 'cloathing of the girls in the houſe forty. The 'alms houſes two hundred. The maintenance of 'the monſters an hundred and twenty. Fortunes 'and furniture, for ſuch young perſons as marry 'in this and the adjoining pariſhes, two hundred. 'All this together amounts only to twelve hundred and ten pounds a year, and yet afford all 'reaſonable comforts. The expences of ourſelves 'and houſhold, in our advantageous ſituation, 'come within eight hundred a year. Finding ſo 'great a balance in our favour, we agreed to appropriate a thouſand a year for the ſociety of 'gentlewomen with ſmall or no fortunes; but it 'has turned out in ſuch a manner that they coſt 'us a trifle. We then dedicated that ſum to the 'eſtabliſhment of a manufacture, but ſince the 'fourth year it has much more than paid its expences, though in many reſpects we do not act, with 'the œconomy uſual in ſuch caſes, but give very 'high wages, for our deſign being to ſerve a mul-

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'titude of poor deſtitute of work, we have no 'nice regard to profit. As we did not mean 'to drive a trade, we have been at a loſs what 'to do with the profits. We have out of 'it made a fund for the ſick and diſabled, from 'which they may receive a comfortable ſupport, 'and intend to ſecure it to them to perpetuity in 'the beſt manner we can.'

'How few people of fortune are there, ſaid Lamont, who could not afford 1200*l.* a year, 'with only retrenching ſuperfluous and burden-'ſome expences? But if they would only imitate 'you in any one branch, how much greater plea-'ſure would they then receive from their fortunes 'than they now enjoy?'

While he was engaged in diſcourſe with the ladies, I obſerved to Mrs. Maynard, that by the account ſhe had given me of their income, their expences fell far ſhort of it. She whiſpered me, that 'their accidental charities were innumerable, 'all the reſt being employed in that way. Their 'acquaintance know they cannot ſo much oblige, 'as by giving them an opportunity of relieving 'diſtreſs. They receive continual applications, 'and though they give to none indiſcriminately, 'yet they never refuſe any who really want. 'Their donations ſometimes are in great ſums, 'where the caſe requires ſuch extraordinary aſſiſ-'tance. If they hear of any gentleman's family 'oppreſſed by too many children, or impoveriſhed 'by ſickneſs, they contrive to convey an adequate 'preſent privately, or will ſometimes aſk permiſ-'ſion to put ſome of their children into buſineſs, 'or buy them places or commiſſions.'

We acquainted the ladies that we ſhould trouble them no longer than that night, and with regret ſaw it ſo ſoon ended. The next morning, upon going into Lamont's room, I found him reading the New Teſtament; I could not forbear expreſſing ſome pleaſure and ſurprize, at ſeeing him thus uncommonly employed.

He told me, 'he was convinced by the conduct 'of the ladies of this houſe, that their religion 'muſt be the true one. When he had before 'conſidered the lives of chriſtians, their doc-'trine ſeemed to have ſo little influence on their 'actions, that he imagined there was no ſufficient 'effect produced by chriſtianity, to warrant a belief, 'that it was eſtabliſhed by a means ſo very extra-'ordinary; but he now ſaw what that religion in 'reality was, and by the purity of its precepts, 'was convinced its original muſt be divine. It 'now appeared evidently to be worthy of its mi-'raculous inſtitution. He was reſolved to examine, 'whether the moral evidences concurred with that 'divine ſtamp, which was ſo ſtrongly impreſſed 'upon it, and he had riſen at day break to get a 'Bible out of the parlour, that he might ſtudy 'precepts, which could thus exalt human nature 'almoſt to divine.'

It was with great joy I found him ſo ſeriouſly affected; and when we went to breakfaſt, could not forbear communicating my ſatisfaction to my couſin, who ſincerely ſhared in it. As ſoon as breakfaſt was over we took leave of the ladies, though not till they had made us promiſe a ſecond viſit, to which we very gladly agreed, for could we with decency have prolonged this, I know not when we ſhould have departed.

You,

You, perhaps, wiſh we had done it ſooner, and may think I have been too prolix in my account of this ſociety; but the pleaſure I find in recollection is ſuch, that I could not reſtrain my pen within moderate bounds. If what I have deſcribed, may tempt any one to go and do likewiſe, I ſhall think myſelf fortunate in communicating it. For my part, my thoughts are all engaged in a ſcheme to imitate them on a ſmaller ſcale.

I am, Sir.

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